THE

CANON

OF THE

New Teſtament

VINDICATED;

In *Anſwer* to the

Objections of *J. T.* in his

AMYNTOR.

By *John Richardſon* B. D formerly Fellow of *Emmanuel College* in *Cambridge.*

Nulla eſt omnino ratio, cur de eâ Traditione dubitemus, quæ nobis Novi Teſtamenti Canonem tranſmiſit. Hen. Dodwelli diſſertat. 1. in Irenæum. *Sect.* 36.

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To the HONOURABLE

SUSANNA NOEL,

Relict of the Honourable *Baptiſt Noel,*

And Mother of the

RIGHT HONOURABLE

The Earl of *Gainsborough.*

Madam.

AFter I had determin'd to let the following Diſcourſe go abroad into the World, I never deliberated about the choice of a Patron, nor ſpent any time in conſidering to whom it ſhould be Dedicated. What I have there Wrote, belongs to your Ladyſhip upon *divers* Accounts, *and eſpecially upon theſe,* that it was drawn up at firſt in obedience to your Commands, (for, under that notion I do and ought to receive the leaſt Intimations of your Pleaſure) was originally deſign'd only for your Service, and has already been admitted in Manuſcript to the honour of a place in your Cloſet, for ſeveral Months. I hope therefore, Madam, you'll not be diſpleas'd, if I preſent you the ſame again from the Preſs, *a little enlarg'd.* For it's

obvious to apprehend, that theſe Papers, being now expos'd to the View of the Publick, may eaſily fall into the hands of *many* Readers, who have not that *Candour* of *Temper*, that *Quickneſs* of *Parts* and *Apprehenſion*, which every one admires in your Ladyſhip; and therefore it was adviſable, that I ſhould make what convenient Proviſion I could, by a few Alterations and Additions, againſt Cavilling and miſunderſtanding. And if, notwithſtanding all the care I have taken, the Work ſtill fall under Cenſure (and ſtrange indeed it muſt be, if it does not with ſome,) the ſevereſt Criticks, I doubt not, will however be ſo juſt, as to acknowledge that the *Deſign*, which is all your Ladyſhip is concern'd in, is good, and fit for a Perſon of Honour and Integrity to own; ſince it aim'd at the vindicating the moſt Venerable Records of our Religion from the Objections, that are urg'd againſt their being Genuine. And whatever faults or defects there may be in the conduct thereof, for want of due Learning or Judgment in the undertaker, I don't in the leaſt deſire your Ladyſhip ſhould juſtify or defend, but leave them all to be charg'd on the account of,

Madam,

Your Ladyſhips moſt humble
and obliged Servant

J. Richardſon.

THE

THE PREFACE.

WHen I firſt drew up the Reflections upon Amyntor, that are here preſented to the Reader, (which was done above half a year ago,) though ſome Alterations and Additions, have been made ſince) they were deſign'd only for the Cloſet of the Honourable Lady, to whom they are Dedicated: For whoſe eaſe, the Quotations and References too, when the matter would bear it, were made in Engliſh. Theſe I have continued in the ſame Language ſtill, partly becauſe I ſuppoſe it will make them of more general uſe, and partly becauſe I think, that though the Diſcourſe be now Publiſh'd, yet the chief Right to it remains ſtill in the firſt Proprietor.

The Reader may perhaps enquire, why theſe Papers come out ſo late, and (it may be too) why they come out at all, ſince another has already Wrote upon the ſame Argument. To the Firſt I reply, that they were not originally intended for the Preſs, and therefore it is no wonder if it prov'd ſo long before they got thither. To the Second, all I have to ſay, is, That what I have here Written being ſeen by ſome Friends, for whom I have a great deference, they judg'd that it would have its uſe too, as well as the other Piece before-mention'd.

To whoſe Judgment I ſubmitted, calling to mind that known Paſſage of a Learned Father, —— (*a*) Every thing that is Written, does not fall into the hands of all Perſons. Perhaps ſome may meet with my Books, who may hear nothing of others, which have treated better of the ſame Subject. It is uſeful therefore that the ſame Queſtions ſhould be handled by ſeveral Perſons, after a different Method, though according to the Principles of the ſame Faith, that ſo the Explication of Difficulties and the Arguments for the Truth, may come to the knowledge of every one, either one way or other.

(*a*) *St. Auguſt. of the Trinity l.* 1. *c.* 3.

And here I ſhould have taken my leave of the Reader *for the preſent, and diſmiſs'd him to the Peruſal of the following* Treatiſe *(if he be ſo diſpos'd) but that I think my ſelf oblig'd to take notice of two or three Paſſages in* the Hiſtory of the Works of the Learned, *for the Month of* May, *which contradict ſome Particulars that I have aſſerted in the following* Treatiſe. *They are in the* Account of the Eccleſiaſtical Hiſtory of Mr. Baſnage, *but to whom they are to be aſcrib'd, I cannot affirm.*

Perhaps they may proceed from that Author, *and perhaps they may be the miſtakes of thoſe who tranſmitted the account of his Work from* Holland *to our* Engliſh Publiſhers. *I charge them therefore directly upon no body, but finding them in the Book above-mention'd, ſhall give my Reaſons why I look upon them as Erroneous.*

I begin with p. 283, *where we are told in the* 2d. Paragraph, *how* Mr. B. demonſtrates that for three Ages after Chriſt, there was no certain Canon; when both Private Perſons, and alſo Whole Churches, partly admitted Suppoſititious

ſititious Books for Sacred, and partly deſpis'd the Genuine as Prophane. *How far this aſſertion is deſign'd to extend, and what Mr.* B. *has done to confirm it, is no other ways Evident to me at preſent, then by the* Argument, *which is immediately ſubjoyn'd, to ſatisfy us of the Strength of the* Demonſtration. *This is intended to affect the Whole* Bible, *but I think a much lower Word then* Demonſtration *might have ſerv'd the turn, unleſs there be ſtronger Reaſons in reſerve. For it follows,* —— † So Origen believ'd that Hermas his Paſtor was a Book Divinely inſpir'd. On the contrary Theodorus of Mopſueſtia calls the Book of Job a Fable borrowed from Paganiſm; the Books of Chronicles and Eſdras a vain Rhapſody; the Song of Solomon a Love Song, *&c.*

We have here two Arguments *alledg'd; one to prove there was no certain* Canon *of the* New Teſtament, *and the other to evince as much for the* Old. *And yet it is Evident at firſt ſight, that neither of theſe Inſtances give us the leaſt information of the Judgment of* Whole Churches, *unleſs* Origen *and* Theodorus *can be prov'd to ſpeak in the Names of more People then themſelves; which I am confident can never be made out.*

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† How far the Ancients had any differences about the *Canon* of the *New Teſtament*, I have explain'd in its due place. my buſineſs here is to prove that *Hermas* was never eſteem'd part of it, or Canonical. And alſo to examine the Teſtimony of *Theodorus* concerning ſome Books of the *Old.*

Origen *I am ſure delivers his own Opinion only, and yet never deſign'd to advance* Hermas *into the Number of* Canonical Books, *as I have obſerv'd in the* following Diſcourſe, *in Anſwer to the Second Objection* (p. 25, 26, and 29, 30.) *This I think I have there ſufficiently ſhown, but ſhall however add a* Teſtimony *or two more to the ſame purpoſe.*

Thus then he ſpeaks, in his Eighth Homily *on* Numbers —— (*b*) That one day of Sin is re-
(*b*) F. 103. compenc'd with a years Puniſhment *we Read not only in this Book*, wherein there is nothing whoſe Truth can be in the leaſt doubted ; *but the ſame things alſo are taught in the Book of the* Paſtor, if any one think good to admit the Teſtimony of that Scripture. *By which Words it is Evident, that* Origen *puts a great difference between the* Paſtor of Hermas *and the Book of* Numbers, *which was one of the* Chriſtian, *as well as* Jewiſh, Canon. *In this, he affirms every thing* deliver'd, *was* undoubtedly true ; *but plainly intimates, he did not judge ſo of the former ; by diſtinguiſhing it from, and placing it in oppoſition to, this, and leaving it to the* Readers *Diſcretion, whether he'll be concluded by the Authority of it, or no. He calls it indeed* Scripture, *but that was a Title frequently given to any Books, whoſe* Subject *was* Religious ; *of which I have produc'd ſeveral Inſtances in the following* Treatiſe, *and ſhall only add here, that the* Author *of whom we are now ſpeaking, even* Origen, *in the* Preface to his Books
(*c*) F. 112. of Principles, (*c*) *calls the* Doctrine of Peter, *twice by that Name, in the compaſs of a few Lines, though he there expreſly tells us,* That it was neither Wrote by St. *Peter*, nor by any other Inſpir'd Perſon.

Again

Again, we Read in his Fourteenth Homily *on* Geneſis, —— (*d*) *Iſaac* therefore dug Wells and the Followers of *Iſaac* dug too. The Followers of *Iſaac* are *Matthew*, *Mark*, *Luke*, *John*. The Followers of *Iſaac* are *Peter*, *James*, and *Jude*. The Apoſtle *Paul* is a Follower of *Iſaac*. For all theſe dig the Wells of the New Teſtament. —— *Here we have all the* Writers *of the* New Teſtament *reckon'd up, but not a Word of* Hermas *and his* Paſtor. (*d*) *p.* 21.

From theſe two Paſſages, *and thoſe, which I have alledg'd in the* following Diſcourſe, *it is apparent, that* * Origen *is every where conſiſtent with himſelf in this matter, and always rejects the Book of* Hermas *from being a part of the* Canon. *It is probable, he might have done the ſame too in his* Explanations on the Epiſtle to the Romans; *from whence the preſent Objection is fetch'd, and have told us in what* Senſe *he judg'd this* Piece *to have been* Divinely Inſpir'd, *if the*

* Perhaps it may be urged, that theſe Paſſages are taken out of theſe Works of *Origen*, which are extant only in *Latine*: I grant it, but then add, that ſo is the Objection too, and certainly a Tranſlation ought to be admitted for an *Anſwer*, when it is alledged for an *Objection*. For according to our *Engliſh* Proverb, *Every Man ought to Buy, and Sell by the ſame Meaſure*. But I Reply, (*2dly.*) That I have ſhewn in the following Diſcourſe (*p.* 29, 30.) that *Origen* ſpeaks after the ſame manner, in thoſe Works of his which are ſtill extant in the *Greek*. And therefore we have a great deal of Reaſon, to ſuppoſe that the Tranſlators have altered nothing in their Verſions, as to this matter, ſince what is found in them is conſonant to thoſe Pieces of his, which are preſerved in the ſame Language, wherein they were firſt Written.

Tranſlator

Tranſlator *of that* Work, *had not contracted it ſo far,* (e) *as to leave out above half of what was Publiſh'd by* Origen. *Perhaps we might have there Read, that he thought* Hermas *to have been no otherwiſe Inſpir'd, then his Maſter* (f) Clemens *and* (g) himſelf *judg'd the* Heathen Philoſophers *to have been, when they taught things agreeable to the* Truth *and* Sound Doctrine; *which* both theſe Fathers *thought were* manifeſted *and* diſcover'd to them *by* God. *And ſo perhaps* Origen *judg'd this Book of* Hermas *inſpir'd, becauſe he look'd upon it as containing* uſeful Truths, *and ſuppos'd nothing of* that nature *could be Wrote without the* Divine Aſſiſtance. *But be that as it will, and let him mean by it what he can, it is Evident he never admitted it into the* Canon, *nor eſteem'd it* Equal Authority *with the* Books of the New Teſtament.

(e) *See the Preface to the Tranſlation f.* 132.

(f) *See Anſwer to the* 2d. *Objection p.* 29.

(g) *l.* 4. *againſt Celſus p.* 181. *l.* 6. *p.* 276.

I proceed now to the Second Part *of the* Argument, *in the Paſſage above alledg'd, which is urg'd againſt ſome Books of the* Old Teſtament, *and is in theſe Words,* —— On the contrary, Theodorus of Mopſueſtia calls the Book of Job, a Fable borrowed from Paganiſm; the Books of Chronicles and Eſdras, a vain Rhapſody; the Song of Solomon a Love Song, *&c. This is produc'd to ſhow the* Church *had no certain* Canon *of the* Old Teſtament *for three Hundred years, but with what Ground or Reaſon will quickly appear.*

I muſt confeſs this does not properly belong to the Province I have undertaken at preſent, which is only to juſtify the Canon *of the* New Teſtament. *But becauſe ſuch as are little vers'd in* Controverſies *of this* Nature, *may poſſibly be ſtumbled at theſe Expreſſions, and perhaps think them unanſwerable,*

able, if I ſay nothing to them when they ly thus directly in my way, I hope I ſhall be excus'd if I ſpend a few lines *in laying open the* Weakneſs of this Objection.

Firſt *then, that the* Jews *had a certain* Canon, *which comprehended all the Books that we reckon as parts of the* Old Teſtament, *and no more, is evident and notorious. Theſe, as we learn from* (*b*) Joſephus, *and* (*i*) Euſebius, *who tranſcribes his Teſtimony, they reduc'd, in their way of computation, to the Number of* Twenty Two. *After what manner they reckon'd them up,* (*k*) *does not belong to my preſent buſineſs to ſet down; but only to remark, that their* Canon *was receiv'd by our* Saviour and his Apoſtles. *For certainly our* Bleſſed Lord *recommended the Books of the* Jewiſh Canon *and none others, when he exhorted his Hearers* (*l*) *to* Search the Scriptures. *He argued too, we may be ſure from them, when he expounded to the* two Diſciples, (*m*) in all the Scriptures, the things concerning himſelf. *Of them without doubt St.* Paul *ſpoke,* (*n*) *when he tells* Timothy, That he had, from a Child, known the Scriptures, which were able to make him Wiſe unto Salvation: *And again, when he adds,* (*o*) All Scripture is given by Inſpiration of God, *&c. Theſe* Paſſages, *and* ſeveral others *of* the ſame Nature, *muſt be underſtood of thoſe* Books, *which paſs'd for* Authentick *among the* Jews, *they can be underſtood of no other*, except he be ſuppoſed to comprehend alſo ſome of the earlieſt Pieces of the *New Teſtament. And therefore, ſince their* Canon *was admitted as ſuch, by our* Lord *himſelf and his* Diſciples, *'tis manifeſt the* Chriſtian

(*b*) *l.* 1. *againſt Apion. p.* 103, 1036.
(*i*) *l.* 3. *c.* 10.
(*k*) *See it done by* Origen *in* Euſebius *l.* 6. *c.* 25.
(*l*) *John* 5. 39.
(*m*) *Luke* 24. 27.
(*n*) 2 *Tim.* 3. 15.
(*o*) *v.* 16.

ſtian Church *was not at liberty to reject what Books*
[p] *Rom.* 3. 2. *of the* Old Teſtament *they pleas'd, but were oblig'd by no leſs then* Infallible Authority, *to eſteem* all for Divine, *which the Jews,* (*p*) to whom the
[q] *Euſeb. Eccleſ. Hiſt. l.* 4. *c.* 26. Oracles of God had been committed, *embrac'd under* that notion. *And accordingly we find* (*q*) Melito, *Biſhop of* Sardis, *in the* Second, *and* (*r*)
[r] *Ibid. l.* 6. *c.* 25. Origen *in the beginning of the* Third Century, *collecting the Names of* thoſe Books, *which had been receiv'd in the* Jewiſh Church, *and Publiſhing the ſame to the* Chriſtians, *as thoſe which ought to be own'd and acknowledg'd by them too for* Canonical. *It's true indeed, the* Book of the Leſſer Prophets *is omitted in the account, which* Euſebius *gives us from* Origen; *but that was certainly a*
[s] *l.* 7. *p.* 339. miſtake *of the* Tranſcriber; *as is apparent* (*beſides ſeveral other Evidences*) *from hence, that* Origen *in his* Treatiſe againſt Celſus, (*s*) *joyns the* Twelve Minor Prophets to the others, *and tells the* Philoſopher that he had Wrote Explanations upon ſome of them.

This is, I think, ſufficient to prove that the Church *had a* Certain Canon *of the* Old Teſtament, *during the* firſt 300 Years; *whatever Opinion* Theodorus *of* Mopſueſtia *might entertain concerning* ſome Particular Books. *Thoſe* very Books *were undoubtedly part of the* Jewiſh Code; *they are reckon'd up as ſuch by the* Fathers *now mention'd, and the whole* Canon of the Jews *aſſerted and atteſted, not only by them, but alſo by our* Saviour *and the* Writers of the New Teſtament.

(2.) *It ſeems not a little Extravagant to bring* Theodorus of Mopſueſtia *as a Witneſs for the* Doctrine *of the* firſt 300 years *in the* caſe now before us, *ſince, if his* Teſtimony *proves any thing, it muſt neceſſarily reach a great way farther. For, as Dr.* Cave *obſerves in his* Hiſtoria Literaria, *He was made* Biſhop *of* Mopſueſtia *in the Year* 392, *and* Govern'd that Church for 36 Years, *not Dying before the* Year 428. *So that if his* Authority *be look'd upon as ſufficient to declare the* Judgment of the Catholick Church *in his days, it muſt prove that the* Canon *of the* Old Teſtament *was not ſettled for* above 400 Years; *but that it was Lawfull for any one, during that time, to admit or reject what Books thereof he pleas'd. This, I am ſure, is a very odd notion, and will never be admitted by thoſe who know, that, in the* Fourth Century, (*t*) Athanaſius *of* Alexandria, (*u*) Hilary *of* Poictiers, (*x*) Cyril *of* Jeruſalem, (*y*) Epiphanius *of* Cyprus, (*z*) Gregory *of* Nazianzum, (*a*) Jerome *of* Paleſtine, *and* (*b*) Rufinus *of* Aquileia, *were of a* quite different Opinion. *There is not one of all theſe, but was more conſiderable then* Theodorus, *and fitter to give an account of the Judgment of the* Catholick Church *then he; and therefore when all of them joyn in* aſſerting *the* Authority of the Books, *which he rejected, 'tis abſurd to pretend that the Opinion, he entertain'd muſt be of* more Authority *then all theirs put together, and aſſure us that the* Church *had then no* Settled Canon *of the* Old Teſtament, *when every one of theſe teach the direct contrary. Theſe great Names, I think, are ſufficient to oppoſe to*

(*t*) *Feſtiv. Epiſtle* 39.
(*u*) *Prologue to the Pſalms.*
(*x*) *Catech.* 4.
(*y*) *Hereſ.* 76.
(*z*) *Of the Genuine Books of the Scripture.*
(*a*) *Prologue to the Books of Kings.*
(*b*) *On the Creed.*

Theodorus

Theodorus *of* Mopſueſtia, *if I had nothing elſe to ſay. But I ſhall proceed further, and alledge, the* Council of Laodicea, *which met about the Year* 360, *and own'd* all the Books of the Old Teſtament, *that were receiv'd by the* Jews, *for* Canonical. *The* Decrees *of this* Councel *were ſoon after taken into the* Code *of the* Univerſal Church, *and are, upon that account, an* undeniable Teſtimony *of the* Opinion *of the* whole Chriſtian World *in this* matter; *and withall inform us, that the* Biſhop of Mopſueſtia, *in ſlighting the Books above-mention'd, did directly contradict the* Judgment *and* Practice *of the* Catholick Church.

(3.) *This will be ſtill further manifeſt, if we conſider that, for this very thing, among others, he was cenſur'd and condemn'd by the* Fifth General Councel. *We have none of the* Writings *of* Theodorus *now extant; nothing but what is quoted from him and preſerv'd by others. Neither can we judge what he believ'd and taught but by theſe* Citations. *There are many* Paſſages taken out *of his* Works *in the* Fourth Collation *of the* Fifth Councel, *at* Conſtantinople, *and among others, Six or Seven Paſſages, wherein it appears, that he allowed neither the* Book of Job *nor the* Canticles, *nor perhaps the* Proverbs *or* Eccleſiaſtes, *to be of* Divine Authority. *But for this, he is in plain terms condemn'd* (c) *by the* Fathers of that Synod; *and we are thereby taught, that the Doctrine which he embrac'd in this Particular, was ſo far from being approv'd, that it was indeed* Rejected *and* Cenſur'd *by the* Catholicks. *It is therefore a very ſtrange method of arguing, to pretend*

(c) *Coll.* 4. *and* 8.

tend to give an account of the Judgment *of the* Church, *by the* Opinions of this Biſhop, *when yet the* Church *expreſly Condemn'd him for holding and maintaining thoſe very* Opinions.

That he call'd the Books of Chronicles and Eſdras, a vain Rhapſody, *I do not find. If he did, both the* Councel *of* Chalcedon, *which* (*d*) *Eſtabliſh'd the* Decrees *of that of* Laodicea, *and alſo the* Fifth General Councel, *of which we have been now ſpeaking, by* (*e*) *ſubſcribing to the* Canons *of the* other, *plainly condemn what he held as to theſe* Books *too. So that if we'll make an eſtimate of the* Doctrine *of the* Church *rather from* Three ſuch Eminent Councels *as theſe were, then from the* Writings *of a* Single Biſhop, *'tis moſt certain and evident, that all the* Books, *which he* rejected, *were* admitted *by the* whole Body of Catholicks *both before and after his time, and conſequently that the Argument, which endeavours to prove the contrary from his particular Opinion, is of no force and efficacy.*

(*d*) *Can.* 1.

(*e*) *Collat.* 8.

I proceed now to ſome other Paſſages, which ſeem exceptionable, and find (p. 281.) *the following Words,* —— Our Author ſays the Second Epiſtle of St. *Peter* is receiv'd by all Churches at this day, and many of the Fathers cited it as Genuine, foraſmuch as *Athanaſius* makes uſe of it againſt the *Arians*, Oration the 2d. *If it be Inſinuated by theſe Words, that* Athanaſius *was the* firſt *who* quoted *it for* Genuine, *I have prov'd that to be a* miſtake *in the* following Papers, *and if the* Reader *pleaſes to conſult the* Anſwer *I have given to the* Fifth Objection,

he'll

(f) *See the Festival Epistle above mention'd.*

he'll *easily see, that there were those, who* (f) *ascrib'd it to St.* Peter, *long before* Athanasius *appear'd in the World. And this* Father *testifies as much himself, who, reckoning* this Epistle *among the* Authentick Books *of the* New Testament, *assures us, that he had the Warrant of the* Ancients *and* first Preachers *of* Christianity *for* all the Pieces, *which he there puts into* his Catalogue.

The Objection *from the* difference of Style, *between* this *and the* first Epistle, *Mr.* B. *answers himself; and therefore I pass on to what follows.*

Eusebius (*l.* 3. *c.* 3.) Writes that he heard from his Ancestors, that this Epistle was not at first inserted into the Canon, *&c.* Eusebius *says something to this purpose, but, I think, what we here Read, carries the matter a little too far. The* Historian *indeed tells us, that he had* receiv'd *by* Tradition, *or from his* Predecessors, *that the* Second Epistle, *ascrib'd to St.* Peter, *was* (*or ought to be*) *no part of the* New Testamant. *But he does not acquaint us of what* Antiquity *or* Extent *the* Tradition *was, much less does he say, as* this Translation *would induce an* unwary Reader *to* Suppose, *that it was* everywhere *rejected upon its* first Appearance; *but only, that those* Books *or* Persons, *from which he deriv'd his* Information, *did not acknowledge it.*

Immediatly

Immediately after we are told, That in Gregory Nazianzen's time, few of the Orthodox receiv'd it for Divine. *Where we may learn this, I cannot tell: I am ſure the* Father *ſays no ſuch thing in thoſe Places, where he treats Profeſſedly of the* Books of the Scripture. *He acknowledges indeed in his* Verſes *to* Seleucus, (*g*) *that* ſome *receiv'd, and* ſome *rejected it. But he does not ſay, that the former were* fewer *than the latter; neither does he interpoſe his own Judgment there. Though he does in* (*h*) another Poem, *where he expreſly reckons* Two Epiſtles *of St.* Peter *among the* Genuine Books of the New Teſtament. *It follows*, The *Syrians* have not inſerted it in their ancient Verſon, neither do they Read it at this day, unleſs privately. *What may be the Reaſon of this, I have ventur'd to gueſs in the* Notes on p. 18. *to which I* refer *the* Reader.

(*g*) *Vol.* 2. p. 194.

(*h*) p. 98.

We are further told, That the *Spanyards* perſiſted in the ſame Error till the Seventh Century, —— *and alſo afterwards* (p. 283.) That the Epiſtle to the *Hebrews* was not receiv'd as Sacred and Authentick, in the Weſtern Church, till the ſame time.

What particular Reaſons Mr. B. *has for theſe* Two Aſſertions, *I cannot judge, becauſe* his Epitomizer *does not alledge any. But I have this* (*beſides the Teſtimony of Single Perſons*) *to urge on the contrary ſide; that the* Council of Laodicea *acknowledg'd* both for Canonical, *about the year* 360, *which being not long after, taken into*

the Code *of the* Universal Church, *and also farther Eſtabliſh'd by the* Fourth General Councel, *in the middle of the* Fifth Century, *is as clear an Evidence, that the* Whole Catholick Church, *in* all the Provinces thereof, receiv'd both theſe Epiſtles for Genuine Parts of the New Teſtament, *as the* Sixth of the Thirty Nine Articles *ſufficiently Teſtifies what Books the* Church of England *acknowledges for* Authentick *at* this day.

(*i*) p. 282. *And therefore I wonder at what is ſay'd* (*i*) *concerning the* Epiſtles of St. *James*, that in the Fifth Age it was [firſt] receiv'd by all as Canonical, becauſe all the Fathers of that Age cite it —— and the *African* Councels inſerted it into their Canons. *How far it appears now to have been admitted before the* Fourth Age, *I have ſhown in the* Following Treatiſe; *but that both it and the other* Controverted Pieces *were generally receiv'd in* that Century, *I have* (*k*) *prov'd from* ſeveral Teſtimonies, *whereof the* Council of Laodicea *is one*; *and certainly the* Canons thereof, *which were every where acknowledg'd, had more Influence upon the general reception of this* Epiſtle, *then the* Synods *of* Carthage *could have, which were never* Submitted *to by the* Eaſtern Chriſtians.

(*k*) *See the Account of the* 2*d. Canon, p.* 14. &c.

But we are further told (p. 283,) *that it was after the* Seventh Century, *before the* Revelation *was acknowledg'd by the* Eaſtern Churches —— *and again*, (p. 284.) That the Laodicean Councel was the firſt that ſtruck the Revelation and Book of Judith out of the Sacred Canon.

What

What is to be thought of the Revelation, *I have hereafter declar'd* (p. 15, 42.) *But as to the* Book *of* Judith, *I anſwer*, (1.) *That the* Laodicean Fathers *could not ſtrike that* out *of the* Canon *of the* Primitive Church, *becauſe it does not appear that it was ever* in; *any more then* Eccleſiaſticus, Tobit, *&c.* (2.) *As to the* Story *of the* Council *of* Nice's *alledging it as* Divine (*which is here hinted at*) *I believe it to be all* Fable. *St.* Jerome *only tells us that it was reported or ſay'd ſo; and notwithſtanding that, it is plain by his* Preface *to the* Proverbs, *that he look'd upon it as* Apocryphal; *which he would never have done, if he had really believ'd the* Nicene Fathers *had taken it into the* Canon. *Neither if there had been the leaſt Evidence that they had ſo done, would the* Synod of Laodicea *have rejected it. For all the World knows, that the* Catholicks *had every where ſo profound a* Reverence *and* Veneration *for the* Decrees *of the* Firſt General Councel, *that it is impoſſible to ſuppoſe a* Provincial Synod *would, ſo quickly* after, *attempt to* reſcind *what they had* once Eſtabliſh'd.

I have now done with the Account *of the* Eccleſiaſtical Hiſtory of Mr. B. *and do here again declare to the World, that none of the* miſtakes, *which I have been here* examining, *ought to be imputed any farther to him, then the Undertakers at* Rotterdam *have Tranſmitted a Faithfull Account of that Work to their* Correſpondents *at* London. *If they have fail'd therein, what Errors there be, muſt be lay'd at* their door, *and not at that of the* Learned Author. *I would gladly indeed have* conſulted *the* Original, *but not having*

the opportunity of ſo doing, I thought my ſelf under a kind of Obligation *to take notice of the* Paſſages above-mention'd, *becauſe they might be urg'd as* Objections *againſt ſome of thoſe* Truths, *which I have* aſſerted *and (I hope)* prov'd *in the* following Diſcourſe.

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ERRATA.

PAge 7. Line 5. for *Writ* Read *Written*. p. 9. l. 3. for *Writ* r. *Wrote*. p. 11. l. 26. add in the Margin *c.* 36. p. 12. in the margin for *l.* 3. *c.* 39. r. *l.* 2. *c.* 39. p. 13. in the Notes l. 8. after *prov'd* inſert *Sect.* 34. p. 25. in the Notes l. 7. for 140. r. 410. l. 26. for *many* r. *any*. p. 32. l. 25. in the very beginning, inſert 111. p. 35. l. 24. as alſo p. 36. l. 21. for 17. r. 10. p. 43, in the Notes, l. 2. r. *n.* 1. *and* 2. p. 52. l. 10. for *underſtood* r. *underſtand*. p. 59. References in the Margin belong not to the words that are *within*, but to thoſe that are *without*, the Parentheſis. p. 61. l. 21. for *would* r. *will* p. 79. l. 11. for *proceeds* r. *precedes*. p. 91. in the Margin for *l.* 3. *c.* 3. r. *l.* 3. *c.* 1. p. 106. l. 2. for *unrighteſs* r. *uprightneſs*. p. 110. l. 26. for 71. r. 72. p. 113. l. 11. and 13. for *Writ*. r. *Writes*.

THE CANON OF THE New Teſtament VINDICATED.

I. OUR Author, in the beginning of this Treatiſe, falls very ſeverely on Mr. *Blackall*, who had charg'd him, in a Sermon before the Houſe of Commons, with queſtioning the Authority of ſome of the Books of the New Teſtament, in his Hiſtory of the Life of *Milton*. This he ſays was an uncharitable as well as Groundleſs Accuſation, and brings many Arguments to prove his Innocence as to that matter. I ſhall not concern my ſelf at preſent in that controverſy, nor examine whether our Author be guilty or not of what is lay'd to his charge.

I am ſure all he Alledges for his own Vindication is a grand Impertinency, and ſuch a Notorious abuſing of his Readers, as is not eaſily to be found in Writers, who are not of his Complexion. It is juſt as if a Man ſhould Vindicate himſelf from having ever Rob'd on the High-way, and as ſoon as he had finiſh'd his diſcourſe, ſhould fall upon and Spoil the next Traveller he meets For thus he after a long harangue, wherein he pretends to clear himſelf from the Aſperſions of Mr. *Blackall*, and prove that he never inſinuated that any of the Books of the New Teſtament might juſtly be queſtion'd, proceeds (if I underſtand Engliſh) to aſſert the ſame with open Face, and brings ſeveral Arguments, which can aim at nothing elſe but to ſink their Authority, and make Men believe there is no ſufficient ground for receiving the preſent Canon. Whether this be his Intention or no, I think will eaſily appear to any one who ſhall conſider the following Particulars.

(1.) He affirms (*p.* 52.) that ſeveral ſpurious Pieces have been quoted by the Fathers as of *equal Authority* with thoſe which we receive; even by thoſe Fathers upon whoſe Teſtimony the preſent Canon is Eſtabliſh'd. From whence it is evident, he would infer, that thoſe Spurious and our Canonical Books ought to go together, and either be equally admitted or equally rejected, ſince they are founded upon the ſame Teſtimonies.

(2.) *He looks upon the Epiſtles of* Barnabas, *the Paſtor of* Hermas, *the Epiſtles of* Polycarp, *of*

of Clemens *Biſhop of* Rome, *and* Ignatius, *to be all Forgeries,* (p. 43, 46.) and yet he tells us (*p.* 44) that the *Ancients pay'd them the higheſt Reſpect, and reckon'd the firſt four of them eſpecially as good as any part of the New Teſtament.* So that the Teſtimony of the Ancients for the Canon of the New Teſtament ſeems to be of no value, ſince, if we'll believe our Author, they put Forgeries in the ſame rank with the Books thereof, and eſteem'd them of the ſame Authority.

(3.) He urges (*p.* 47.) that he can't underſtand why the Writings of St. *Mark* and St. *Luke* ſhould be receiv'd into the Canon, and thoſe of *Clemens* Biſhop of *Rome* and St. *Barnabas* be excluded, by thoſe who look upon them as Genuine. Since the two former were not Apoſtles, but only Companions and Fellow-Labourers with the Apoſtles, and ſo were the two latter as well as they.

(4.) We Read (*p.* 56.) in ſo many words, that, *There is not one ſingle Book of the New Teſtament, which was not refus'd by ſome of the Ancients as unjuſtly Father'd upon the Apoſtles, and really forg'd by their Adverſaries.*

(5.) He tells us in the ſame Page, *That the Epiſtle to the* Hebrews, *that of St.* James, *the Second of St.* Peter, *the Second and Third of St.* John, *the Epiſtle of St.* Jude, *and the* Revelation, *were a long time plainly doubted by the Ancients.* And as if this had not been enough he adds (*p.* 64.) that *they were rejected a long time by all Chriſtians, almoſt with univerſal conſent.*

(6.) To ſhow that he'll leave no Stone unturn'd to expreſs the favourable Opinion he has of the New Teſtament, he brings in *Celſus* a Heathen (*p.* 60.) as a Witneſs againſt the Chriſtians, *Who exclaims againſt the too great Liberty they took* (*as if they were drunk*) *of changing the firſt Writings of the Goſpel, three or four or more times, that ſo they might deny whatever was urg'd againſt them, as retracted before.*

(7.) To *Celſus* in the ſame Page, he joyns the *Manicheans*, (fitly enough I confeſs) who *ſhew'd other Scriptures, and deny'd the Genuineneſs of the whole new Teſtament.*

(8.) We are told (*p.* 64) that *the Ebionites or Nazarens* (*who were the oldeſt Chriſtians*) *had a different Copy of St.* Matthews *Goſpel*; *the* Marcionites *had a very different one of St.* Luke's; *St.* John's *was attributed to* Cerinthus; *and all the Epiſtles of St.* Paul *were deny'd by ſome, and a different Copy of them ſhew'd by others.*

(9.) He urges (*p.* 53, 54.) that *Euſebius rejects the Acts, Goſpel, Preaching and Revelation of* Peter *from being Authentick for no other reaſon, but becauſe no Ancient or Modern Writer* (*ſays he*) *has quoted proofs out of them. But herein* Euſebius *was miſtaken, for the contrary appears by the Teſtimonies mark'd in the Catalogue, which any Body may compare with the Originals. In another place he ſays that the Goſpels of* Peter, Thomas, Matthias, *and ſuch-like, with the Acts of* John, *and the other Apoſtles are Spurious, becauſe no Eccleſiaſtick Writer, from the Times of the Apoſtles down*

down to his own, has vouchſaf'd to quote them, which is abſolutely falſe of ſome of them, as we have already ſhewn. —— *Had* Euſebius *found any of theſe Pieces cited by the precedent Orthodox Writers, he would have own'd them as Genuine Productions of the Apoſtles, and admitted them, as we ſay, into the Canon. But having met no ſuch Citations, he preſently concluded there were none, which made him reject thoſe Books. And I ſay (what I have already demonſtrated) that Proofs were quoted out of ſome of them long before, ſo that they might ſtill belong to the Canon for all* Euſebius.

(10.) He Produces (*p.* 69, *&c.*) a long Paſſage out of Mr. *Dodwell*, which, (if we'll believe him) Reflects more upon the Canon of the New Teſtament, as to the certainty and Authority of it, then any thing which had been before excepted againſt in the Life of *Milton*.

Now let any one lay all theſe Paſſages together, and I fancy he'll be of my mind, and eaſily believe that our Author's Vindication of himſelf againſt Mr. *Blackall* was impertinent, and ſuch a preſuming on the weakneſs of his Readers, as is not uſual; ſince he preſently after commits that fault (though I doubt he'll not call it ſo) from which juſt before he attempted to clear himſelf, and makes no ſcruple at all of expoſing the Writings of the New Teſtament, which we believe to be Canonical, as doubtful and uncertain.

II. I ſuppoſe it will not be thought ſufficient for me only to have proceeded thus far, and (in our Authors Language, *p.* 8.) *to have ſhown the Enemy and given an account of his Forces*, except I endeavour to weaken them too, and thereby hinder them from doing ſuch Execution as they ſeem to threaten.

But becauſe the Particulars above-alleg'd, are Objections againſt the general Doctrin of the Church in the matter now before us, I think it will be proper, before I examine them, to lay down the Grounds upon which the Canon of the New Teſtament has been fix'd and determin'd. Which I ſhall do with all the Brevity, the Subject will admit of, as deſigning to enlarge upon and confirm ſeveral Particulars in the ſequel of this Diſcourſe, where fit occaſion will be offer'd.

The Word *Canon* is Originally *Greek*, and in the Ordinary acceptation ſignifies a *Rule*, and therefore when made uſe of in Divinity, we underſtand by the *Canon* and *Canonical Books*, thoſe Books, which were deſign'd by God to be the *Rule* of our Faith and Practice.

I ſhall not diſcourſe any thing now concerning the Books of the Old Teſtament, becauſe they are no part of the preſent controverſy. † But in the New Teſtament, thoſe Books only are accounted *Canonical* which were *Writ*, or however *Authoriz'd*, by the Apoſtles.

For they being the Immediate Diſciples of, and Attendants upon our Lord, and being Commiſſion'd by him to inſtruct the World in the Doctrin which he taught them, were without

† I think it pertain'd to the Apoſtles, to approve the Sacred Books —— Neither have we any Canonical Books, either of the Old or New Teſtament, but thoſe which the Apoſtles *approv'd and deliver'd* to the Church. *Melchior Canus in his Common Places*, l. 2. c. 7. p. 43. Edit. Lov. 1569. Octavo.

The *Church*, like a faithful *Guardian*, hath preſerved and conveyed to her *Children*, as Writings received from the Apoſtles, not only what they Penned themſelves, but alſo thoſe Pieces too, which being Wrote by Perſons who were not Apoſtles, yet were by the Apoſtles confirmed, Publickly Approved, and recommended to the Church. Arch Biſhop of *Spalato*, in his *Chriſtian Common-Wealth*, *l.* 7. *c.* 1. *S.* 15. *Edit. Hanov.* 1622.

—— No other Books properly belonging to the Holy Scriptures, but ſuch as the Apoſtles of Chriſt left behind them. Bp. *Coſins Hiſt. of the Canon of the Old Teſtament. Sect.* 73. *p.* 80.

So likewiſe *Epiſcopius*, in his Inſtitutions, (*l.* 4. *Sect.* 1. *c.* 5.) Remarks that thoſe Books make up the *Canon* of the New Teſtament, which were *either Wrote by the Apoſtles or with their Approbation.* And again in his Treatiſe of the Rule of Faith, *c.* 7. —— *Whatever was Wrote or Approv'd by the Apoſtles, was, without Controverſy, dictated by the Holy Ghoſt.*

doubt *infallible (for else they might have led the World into Error) and therefore their Teaching, their Writings, their Judgment ought to be receiv'd with all Veneration and Submission.

St. *Paul* is reckon'd justly of the same Authority with the rest, because our Saviour was pleas'd to appear to him from Heaven, reveal his Gospel to him in his own Person, and appoint him an Apostle after an extraordinary manner; for he Receiv'd his Commission not from Men (as himself tells us, *Gal.* 1. 1, 12.) but from Jesus Christ and God the Father.

What the Apostles Wrote, and what they Authoriz'd, can be known no other way, then by the Testimonies of those who liv'd at the same time with them, and the Tradition of those who succeeded them.

And therefore whenever any Churches receiv'd any Writings, to Instruct them in Religion, from the Apostles, they look'd upon those Writings as *Canonical*, or *a Rule of their Faith and Manners*, in the Particulars whereof they Treated. And whenever any other Churches were assur'd, either by the Testimony of those who knew it themselves, or by certain Tradition, that such and such were Apostolical Writings, they too esteem'd them Canonical, preserv'd them as such themselves, and as such transmitted them to others.

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* It is not my Business here to prove that the Apostles *were* Infallible, but only to show the *Necessity* that they *shou'd* be so.

III. Hence

III. Hence it appears, that the Written Canon encreas'd gradually in it ſelf, as the Apoſtles Writ new Books, and was likewiſe gradually ſpread over the World, as Particular Churches receiv'd thoſe Books from others, with good Teſtimonies and Evidences of their being the genuine Works of thoſe, under whoſe Names they were convey'd to them. No wonder then, if ſome Books were ſooner and ſome later receiv'd as Canonical, by the Univerſal Body of Chriſtians in all Places, becauſe either the Books themſelves, or the Teſtimonials to prove them Apoſtolical, might, nay Naturally would, be tranſmitted to ſome Churches later then others, as they were Situated nearer to, or remov'd farther from, thoſe Cities or Countrys, where they were firſt Publiſh'd, or enjoy'd a greater or leſs intercourſe with them.

But the *General* conveying of a *great part* of them over the *whole* Chriſtian Church, ſeems to have been perform'd in the Beginning of the Second Century, about the time of St. *Johns* Death, or immediately after it. For as *Euſebius* tells us, in his Eccleſiaſtical Hiſtory (*l.* 3. *c.* 37.) there were then great numbers of Perſons, Diſciples of the Apoſtles, who travell'd over the World, building up Churches where the Apoſtles had before lay'd the Foundations, and Preaching the Faith of Chriſt in other Places, which had never heard of it before, carrying along with them the *Copies of the Goſpels* to all Countreys whither they Travell'd. And it is very probable, that they took with them ſome other parts of the New Teſtament beſides, ſince

ſince as we ſhall immediately ſee from the Teſtimonies of *Ireneus* and *Tertullian*, they were own'd and admitted everywhere ſoon after.

IV. For the clearing of which, I ſhall conſider what Books were firſt taken into the Canon, by the whole Church, and what afterwards; not omitting alſo to remark that they had beſides, ſome that were ſtil'd *Eccleſiaſtical*, and others *Spurious* or *Suppoſitious*.

(1.) The Four Goſpels, the *Acts* of the *Apoſtles*, Thirteen Epiſtles of St. *Paul*, (that to the † *Hebrews* being excepted) the firſt of St. *Peter*, and the firſt of St. *John*, *were all receiv'd over the Chriſtian World*, in the time of *Euſebius*, as appears from his (*a*) *Eccleſiaſtical Hiſtory*. To him I might joyn *Athanaſius*, the *Council of Laodicea*, *Epiphanius*, *Ruffinus*, &c. But becauſe they Wrote a while after, when the *whole Canon* of the New Teſtament began to be ſettled, their Teſtimony will reach the other Books, as well as theſe under conſideration, and therefore I ſhall reſerve them for a fitter place. It's true indeed *Euſebius* and thoſe others did not Publiſh their Judgments on this Subject till above 300 Years after Chriſt, and therefore ſeem ſomething of the lateſt to be Witneſſes in a caſe of

(*a*) *L.* 3. *C.* 25.

† *Euſebius* ſeems in *l.* 3. *c.* 25. to take the Epiſtle to the *Hebrews* into the *Canon*, but becauſe he does not expreſly name it there, and in the 3*d. Ch.* of that Book, he tells, that it was queſtion'd *by ſome*; I have therefore left it out, as a Book that was not *Univerſally* taken into the *Canon* at that time.

this

this Nature. But then we ought to obſerve, not only that they ſpeak poſitively what was the general Judgment of their Days, but that *three* of them appeal to *the Tradition of the Church*, and the *Teſtimony of the Ancients*, who, living nearer the Age of the Apoſtles, had better opportunities of informing themſelves from Authentick Proofs, what were their true and Genuine Works. It was upon this *Teſtimony of Primitive and ſucceeding Writers*, that the Catholick Church did, in the time above mention'd, admit theſe Books as Apoſtolical, and account them for Canonical Parts of the New Teſtament. Many of the Writings, which they conſulted, are now Periſh'd, but ſome have been preſerv'd to our days, from which I ſhall produce an Inſtance or two, to ſhow that the Church, in the time of *Euſebius*, had real warrant from Antiquity, to look upon the Books, whereof I am now ſpeaking, as Canonical or Rules of Faith, ſince they had been eſteem'd for ſuch long before, and were attributed to them, whoſe Names they bear, by their Predeceſſors. Thus *Tertullian*, who flouriſh'd at the end of the Second Century, tells us expreſly, in his Diſcourſe of the *Preſcription of Hereticks*, that *the Law and the Prophets, the Goſpels and Apoſtolick Writings*, were the Books, *from whence we are to learn our Faith.* And that we may know what he meant by *Goſpels and Apoſtolick Writings* (for about them we are only concern'd at preſent) he does, as occaſion was offer'd, in his ſeveral Treatiſes, *appeal to all the Books above-mention'd* c. 36

tion'd (* excepting only the Epiſtle to *Philemon*, out of which, being very ſhort, he had no occaſion, I ſuppoſe, to produce any Teſtimonies) *as the real Writings of the Apoſtles and Perſons to whom we aſcribe them.* And *Irenæus* before him, who convers'd, as we learn from himſelf, with (*b*) *Polycarp* and (*c*) others that had been inſtructed by the Apoſtles and immediate Diſciples of our Lord, mentions (*d*) the *Code of the New Teſtament* as well as of the Old, calls the one as well as the other, the (*e*) *Oracles of God*, and (*f*) *Writings dictated by his Word and Spirit*, ſpeaks expreſly ſeveral times (*g*) of the *four*

(*b*) *L.* 3. *C.* 3.
(*c*) *L.* 2. *C.* 39.
(*d*) *L.* 1. *C.* 1. *L.* 3. *C.* 12.
(*e*) *L.* 1. *C.* 1.
(*f*) *L.* 2. *C.* 47.
(*g*) *L.* 3. *C.* 1. &c.

* If it be enquir'd what Evidence we have that the Epiſtle to *Philemon* (ſince it's quoted neither by *Tertullian* nor *Irenæus*) *belongs to this firſt ſet of Canonical Books.* I anſwer, (1.) That *Euſebius*, and *Gregory Nazianzen* both in *his Jambicks to Seleucus*, and his *Poem concerning the genuine Books of the Scripture*, manifeſtly reckon this Epiſtle among thoſe parts of the Canon which were never doubted of. (2.) *Origen* expreſly aſcribes it to St. *Paul*, in his Nineteenth Homily on *Jeremy*, (*Ed. G. L.*) *p.* 185. (3.) Though *Tertullian* does not in direct terms tell us that it was accounted one of the Canonical Books in his time, yet he ſays that from whence it neceſſarily follows. For (*l.* 5. againſt *Marcion c.* 21.) he wonders why that Heretick rejected the Epiſtles to *Timothy* and *Titus*, which concern the State of the whole Church, when yet he receiv'd another written to a ſingle Perſon, as well as theſe; whereby none can be underſtood but this to *Philemon*. Since 'tis well known that *Marcion* rejected all the Canonical Epiſtles, and conſequently the Second and Third of St. *John*; which alſo were not at that time *generally* embrac'd by the Catholicks. And therefore ſince he joyn'd with the Catholicks in receiving one Epiſtle to a ſingle Perſon, it muſt neceſſarily be this: For he rejected all the others.

Goſpels,

Goſpels, and quotes *the ſame Books of the New Teſtament*, which we obſerv'd *Tertullian* does, and under the *Names of the ſame Authors* that he does, even of thoſe by whom we now believe they were written, and blames (*b*) the Hereticks of thoſe times for rejecting their Authority. They were Hereticks only that rejected them in thoſe early Ages, neither does it appear that ſo much *as one of the Books* we are now conſidering, was ever doubted of, or call'd in queſtion by any of the Members of the Catholick Church, after they were once publickly known. This is enough to evince that *Euſebius* and the Church in his time had Teſtimonies of the Ancients to aſſure them, that the Books above-ſpecifi'd were really the Writings of the Diſciples and Followers of our Saviour. And beſides theſe † two Authors now mention'd, there are others ſtill Extant, as *Clemens* of *Alexandria*, *Origen* and *Cyprian*, who' confirm the ſame Truth, and many now loſt, which they then had in their hands, from whence they drew further proofs and Evidences in this matter.

(*b*) *L.* 3. *C.* 2.

† *Ireneus* and *Tertullian* ought not to be accounted here as *ſingle Witneſſes*; but as thoſe which deliver what was the Judgment of all thoſe Churches, with which they convers'd. See hereafter *Sect.* XXXIII. where particular Places are produc'd out of both of them, in which they quote the ſeveral Books under the Names of thoſe Authors, to whom they are now aſcrib'd; and 'tis alſo prov'd, that what they believ'd concerning them, was confirm'd by the Suffrage of the Univerſal Church, that is, all thoſe parts of it with which they had Correſpondence.

(2.) The Epiſtle to the *Hebrews*, the Second of St. *Peter*, the Second and Third of St. *John*, the Epiſtle of St. *James* and of St. *Jude*, and the *Revelation*, were at the beginning queſtion'd by *ſome*, as *Euſebius* informs us in the Book and Chapter above-alleg'd; but then, as the ſame Author in the ſame Places aſſures us, they were receiv'd and acknowledg'd by *many others*. The Agreement about theſe, was not ſo general and uniform as about the other Books. Some Perſons, and Churches perhaps, receiv'd them all, but the whole Body of the Catholicks did not, as being not then fully ſatisfy'd, everywhere, concerning the Evidence which was produc'd for them. Yet neither were they generally rejected, as ſome pretend. For ſeveral of them were receiv'd in ſeveral Places, as it would be very eaſy to prove from *Irenæus*, *Tertullian* and others of the Fathers yet extant. Of which more by and by when we come to our Authors fifth Objection. But however the caſe was at firſt, it is apparent that upon a due Examination of the Teſtimonies of the Ancients, produc'd on their behalf, theſe alſo were in proceſs of Time receiv'd into the Canon. For (*i*) *Athanatius*, in one of his Feſtival Epiſtles, Wrote about 20 Years after the Hiſtory of *Euſebius*, *reckons them expreſly among*

(*i*) *Athanaſ Vol.* 2. *G.L.p.* 39. and *Balſam.p.*921

the reſt. So does alſo (*k*) the *Council of Laodicea* *, excepting only the *Revelation.* So does (*l*) *Epiphanius*, and ſo alſo does (*m*) *Rufinus* towards the end of that Century, *and vouches the Authority of the Ancients and the Monuments of his Predeceſſors for ſo doing.* As *Athanaſius* alſo had done before him.

(*k*) *Ibid. p.* 850.
(*l*) *Hereſ.* 76. *p.* 941.
(*m*) *On the Creed p.* 26.

Nazianzen (*n*) indeed in his *Jambicks to Seleucus* (which ſometimes go under the Name of *Amphilochius*) tells us that the controverted Books were in his time doubted of by ſome. But 'tis plain from the Verſes, under his own

(*n*) *Vol.* 2. *p.* 194.

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* The Council of *Laodicea* (*Can.* 59.) *forbids reading Pſalms of private Compoſition or Uncanonical Books in the Church, and commands, that only the Canonical Books of the Old and New Teſtament ſhould be read there.* And then adds (*Can.* 60.) *Theſe Books of the Old Teſtament ought to be Read,* Geneſis, Exodus, *&c. And of the New, theſe, the four Goſpels,* &c. Reckoning up all thoſe which we count Canonical, only leaving out the *Revelation.* Now the difficulty is, whether the *Revelation* be left out, as a Book that is not Canonical, in the Judgment of the Council, or as a Canonical Book, which is not fit to be *Publickly* Read, becauſe not intelligible by the generality. For my part, I muſt ſay, that I cannot determine this Queſtion either the one way or the other. For ſince the Fathers have not expreſly declar'd themſelves, they might, for ought we can tell, leave it out as a Book which they thought not Canonical; or they might leave it out as a Canonical Book, which could not be rightly underſtood by Common Hearers. For thus the Church of *England* does not Read this Book in the Leſſons, for that very Reaſon, but only ſome ſmall Portions, inſtead of the Epiſtles, on ſome peculiar Feſtivals. And thus alſo ſhe Reads no part at all of the *Canticles* upon the ſame account, and yet has aſſerted both the one and the other to be part of the Canon, in the Thirty Nine Articles.

Name,

(o) P. 98. Name, (o) *concerning the Genuine Books of Scripture*, that he receiv'd them all, the *Revelation*
(p) F. 24. only excepted. And it appears too by (p) St. *Jerome*, that when he Wrote his Letter to *Dardanus*, ſeveral of the *Latine* Church rejected the *Epiſtle to the Hebrews*, and ſeveral of the *Greek* the *Revelation*. But he declares poſitively, that he own'd both for Canonical, *becauſe moſt of the Ancients had done ſo before him*. However the Council of *Laodicea* being admitted into the Code of the Univerſal Church, and afterwards more ſolemnly ratify'd, among o-
(q) *A. C.* 450. *See alſo Act.* 11. *of that Council*, p. 406. thers, in the firſt Canon of the (q) Fourth General Council, ſhows plainly that both the *Eaſtern* and *Weſtern* Churches did then receive *all the Pieces mention'd above*, for Canonical, excepting the *Revelation* only; and what opinion they had of that, we can't Judge from this Argument, becauſe the *Laodicean* Fathers had ſaid nothing *of it* in their laſt Canon. When it was firſt *Univerſally* receiv'd is not very eaſy to decide. Certain it is from the Sixteenth
(r) *A. C.* 633. Canon of the Fourth Councel at (r) *Toledo*, that there were very many then, at leaſt in *Spain*, who rejected it. And certain it is from the ſame Canon, if we may believe the Fathers who compos'd it, that it had been declar'd formerly part of the New Teſtament by many Councils and Synodical Decrees. But the Names of thoſe Councils, which had aſſerted the Divine Authority of this Book, are not there ſet down; and therefore I muſt Ingenuouſly confeſs that I can't tell what Synods the Fathers had an Eye
(s) *A. Cti.* 419. to therein, beſides that of (s) *Carthage*, which reckons the Apocalypſe by Name, among the Canonical Books of the New Teſtament. For

as

as to the Famous Decree of the *Roman* Council under *Gelaſius*, I ſuppoſe that was not forg'd till ſome years after the Fathers at *Toledo* made that Canon which we are now conſidering. However, it is Evident that many of the moſt Primitive Fathers acknowledg'd the *Revelation* to be (*t*) Divine, and Written by St. *John* the Apoſtle; it is Evident too from what has been above alledg'd, that *Athanaſius*, *Jerome*, and *Ruſinus* receiv'd it, and appeal'd to the Ancients as their Warrant for ſo doing. We have ſeen likewiſe that it was own'd by *Epiphanius*, and acknowledg'd as Canonical by a Synod at *Carthage*. It was admitted alſo for ſuch by (*x*) St. *Ambroſe*, (*y*) St. *Auguſtin*, and many others of that and ſucceeding Ages. But whether the diffuſive Body of the Church, was ſo far ſatisfy'd of its being Authentick, as to receive it *every where* for ſuch till it was Eſtabliſh'd by the Sanction of the Sixth General (*z*) Council, I ſhall not take upon me to determine. However, *then* the Controverſy ſeems to have been brought to an end, if not before. For the Fathers of that Aſſembly having receiv'd, not only the Decrees of the Council of *Carthage*, but alſo (which is more expreſs in the caſe) (*a*) *the Epiſtle of Athanaſius above-mention'd*, did thereby own the *Revelation* to be properly Canonical, and the whole Church

(*t*) *See hereafter Sect. XI. and XXV.*

(*x*) *L. 3. of Virgins p. 98.*

(*y*) *Of Hereſ. c. 30.*

(*z*) *A. C. 680.*

(*a*) *Can. 2.*

of that Age †. (especially the Orientals among whom this Book had been most question'd) submitting to their Authority, back'd with so good Evidence, *This, as well as the other controverted Pieces had been*, was afterwards reckon'd as a Genuine part of the New Testament.

† That the *Syrians* Read none of the Controverted Pieces in their Churches, besides the *Epistle to the Hebrews* and *that of St. James*, is Evident from the New Testament, which *Ignatius* Patriarch of *Antioch*, sent to be Printed in *Europe*, the last Century, and was actually Printed by *Widmanstadius* at *Vienna* in the Year 1555. But why they do so, may be a question. It does not seem to be because they look upon the rest as not Canonical, for they have them too in the *Syriack* Tongue, as we may learn from Ep. *Walton* and *F. Simon*. If I may have leave to interpose my Conjecture, I should think it proceeds from hence; That this Translation is *very Ancient*, and was *Certainly made before the controverted Books were Universally receiv'd*, and their *Lectionaries* or *Rubricks* adapted to it. And having no other Version made, till many years after, of the rest of the Catholick Epistles and the *Revelation*, they would not alter the old *Lectionaries* (when they had one) as they must have done, if they had taken in the other Pieces. This may be judg'd a fond thing, and so it is; but not half so fond and contrary to common Sense, as what is practis'd by the *Romanists*, these very *Syrians*, and some others of the Eastern Churches. For the Scriptures having been of old Translated into the Languages of Particular Countries, that they might be understood by the Common People as well in the Publick Service as in their Private Reading, they still continue (so Superstitious are they in observing an old Custom) *to Read them and Celebrate their Liturgies* in *Latine* and the Ancient Tongues of the Places specified, though they are now grown quite out of use, and the Unlearned understand not one word of them.

That

That theſe Books were not *every where* admitted upon their *firſt* appearing, ſhows that the Church did not proceed raſhly and careleſly in the caſe. And that they were *everywhere* admitted *afterward*, ſhows that there was clear Proof and Evidence on their behalf, and therefore they have been ever ſince joyn'd to the reſt of the Books, which we eſteem Canonical. The caſe of thoſe Spurious Pieces, which were thruſt into the World under venerable Names, was clear contrary. They flouriſh'd a little and made a ſhow, when they firſt came abroad, but after a while, not being able to ſtand a ſtrict Examination, vaniſh'd and fell to nothing; ſo that little has been left of moſt of them, beſides their Names, for many Ages.

(3.) There have been always in the Church, beſides theſe, other Writings that were call'd *Eccleſiaſtical*. Such under the New Teſtament, are the Works of the Ancient Fathers, which have ever been look'd upon as uſeful and of good Authority (though not infallible as the Canonical Scripture is,) being generally compos'd, not only by Pious and Learned Men, but alſo by thoſe, who liv'd in, or near, the Primitive Ages of Chriſtianity, and conſequently had better opportunities of being acquainted with the Doctrin and Practice of the firſt Preachers thereof, then we have. And among theſe, *they* have always been eſteem'd of the greateſt Authority (if their Character was anſwerable upon other accounts) who flouriſh'd and wrote neareſt the times of the Apoſtles. Of this ſort is (that which is call'd) the firſt Epiſtle of *Clemens* to the *Corinthians*, which

though *Euſebius* tells us was of ſo great Eſtimation (*b*) as to be Read Publickly in ſeveral Churches, yet he (*c*) excludes it from the Canon. And ſo he does the Paſtor of (*d*) *Hermas*, which both he, and (*e*) *Athanaſius* and *Ruſinus*, acknowledge to have been Read too, openly in ſome places, yet they all joyn in raiſing it no higher then an Eccleſiaſtical Piece. Which I therefore remark here, becauſe we ſhall find our Author hereafter making a great ſtir with theſe two Treatiſes.

(*b*) *Eccl. Hiſt. l.* 3. *c.* 16.
(*c*) *L.* 3. *c.* 25.
(*d*) *Ibid.*
[*e*] *In the places above cited n.* 1. *of this Section.*

(4.) Several * *Spurious* Writings were alſo Publiſh'd very early in the Church, under the Names of the Apoſtles and other great Men of which our Author has given a large Catalogue. Theſe were for the moſt part compos'd by (*f*) *Heretick* and other Hereticks to maintain and propagate their Falſe and Wicked Opinions, and ſome too were the Works of Zealous but Simple Catholicks. As for inſtance, the Travels of *Paul* and *Thecla*, the Author of which, as (*g*) *Tertullian* and (*h*) St. *Jerom* inform us, wrote it out of Love to St. *Paul*. He was diſcover'd in the Life time of St. *John*, and by him Cenſur'd. Many of theſe were found out to be Cheats aſſoon as they

[*f*] *Iren. l.* 1. *c.* 17.
[*g*] *Treatiſe of Bapt. c.* 17.
[*h*] *Treat. of Eccleſ. Writ. in* Luke.

* Thoſe Writings, which were Publiſh'd under falſe Names, were certainly *Spurious*. But it is not neceſſary to ſuppoſe that all, which the Fathers call'd *Apocryphal*, were of that ſort. For the Title of *Apocryphal* is often apply'd to ſuch Ancient Books, as were no part of the Canon; many of which were certainly no Forgeries. See hereafter *Sect.* XXIII.

came

came abroad, and others, not till after ſome years. However they were generally diſcover'd ſooner or later, ſo that of the Forgeries of the firſt Ages, there is little remaining to our Times, except the bare Titles.

Having premis'd thus much, I ſhall now proceed to conſider the Objections of our Author. V.

I. Then he affirms (*p.* 52.) that ſeveral Spurious Books were quoted by the Fathers, as *of equal Authority*, with thoſe which we now receive, even by thoſe Fathers, upon whoſe Teſtimony the preſent Canon is Eſtabliſh'd. From whence, it is Evident, he would and muſt infer that thoſe Spurious and our Canonical Books ought to go together, and either be equally admitted or be equally rejected, ſince they are founded upon the ſame Teſtimony.

To which I Anſwer,

(1.) That the quoting other Authors in the ſame Diſcourſes, wherein we appeal to the Writings of the Sacred Volums, is no Evidence that we Judge them of the ſame Authority. For is there any thing more uſual in Moral and Theological Treatiſes, then to Cite the Scriptures and Fathers and Philoſophers, and Poets too, ſometimes, Promiſcuouſly, as there is Occaſion? And yet no Man in his Wits ever thought, that by ſo doing, theſe three laſt were declar'd as infallible as the firſt. How often have *Tully* and *Seneca* and *Plato* and others of their Rank, been quoted by Chriſtian Writers

in the ſame Diſcourſes, wherein they have fetch'd Proofs from the Evangeliſts and Apoſtles? And yet, I dare ſay, they never dreamt that, for ſo doing, they might be charg'd as making *Tully* equal to St. *John*, or *Seneca* to St. *Paul*. We quote Authors, not always as convincing Proofs of the Truth of what we deliver, but ſometimes becauſe they expreſs themſelves handſomly, argue Pathetically, Reaſon cloſely, or to ſhow that others have been of the ſame Judgment with us, though at the ſame time we think them no more infallible then we do our ſelves. And after this manner, (that I may come cloſe to our Authors Objection) did *Origen* proceed, who is obſerv'd to have cited as many Apocryphal Writings as any almoſt of the Fathers (though he produces generally, if we'l believe (*i*) a Learned Man, nothing but what is profitable or uſeful from them) and yet he does not advance any of them into the Canon, but reſerv'd that Honour for thoſe Books to which it did belong.

(*i*) *Monſieur Valois's notes on Euſeb. l.* 3. *c.* 38.

(2.) Though our Author affirms in this Objection, that the Fathers quoted ſeveral Spurious Books as *of equal Authority* with thoſe which we account Canonical, yet he gives us no proof thereof, ſince the bare Citing both together is, as we have ſeen, no Evidence. Something indeed he offers at (*p.* 44.) which ſounds like an Argument, and to that perhaps he may here refer, and therefore I have put it in the Second place, that I may allow every thing, he urges, its due force.

II. Therefore,

II. Therefore, He looks upon the *Epiſtle of Barnabas, the Paſtor of Hermas, the Epiſtles of Clemens Bp. of Rome, Polycarp and Ignatius to be all Forgeries* (*p.* 43. 46.) and yet tells us (*p.* 44.) *that the Ancients pay'd them the higheſt reſpect, and reckon'd the four firſt of them eſpecially as good as any part of the New Teſtament.* So that the Teſtimony of the Ancients for the Canon of the New Teſtament ſeems to be of no value, ſince, if we'l believe our Author, they put Forgeries in the ſame Rank with the Books thereof, and eſteem'd them of the ſame Authority. VI.

(1.) To which I Anſwer, That the Poſitive Charge of *Forgeries* ſeems a little too confident, at this time of day, upon ſo many Books at a clap; moſt of which have had a good Reputation for ſeveral Ages, and have been of late days juſtified and defended by the Pens of divers of the firſt Rank for Learning and Criticiſm. But our Author has no conſideration for that. The Writers of theſe Pieces were all (if we'l be perſwaded by him) *Ignorant* and *Superſtitious*, whatever Opinion the World may have formerly entertain'd of the Knowledge and Piety of any of them; and their Aſſertors, Men of no Judgment and Underſtanding, who undertook a cauſe, which can't be defended. For ſo we Read (*p.* 38.) *It's the eaſieſt task in the World* (*next to that of ſhewing the Ignorance and Superſtition of the Writers*) *to prove all theſe* (and a great many more there reckon'd up) *Spurious.* But I ſhall crave leave to ſay, that talking and doing are very different things, and

our Author will find it a more difficult Employment to run down ſome of theſe Pieces, then it was to heap together a Catalogue of Writers, where ſo many Collections had been already made to his hand. Cloſe Reaſoning and Arguing are quite of another Nature, and what an excellent Talent he has at *making out Forgeries*, will eaſily appear to any one who ſhall take the pains to compare what he ſays in Anſwer *to the Vindication of K. Charles the Martyr*, either with the *Book it ſelf*, or the *Reply of his Learned Adverſary*.

But however, let that be as it will, I ſay he extreamly wrongs the Ancients in the accuſation he here brings againſt them, when he ſays, that *they reckon'd the four firſt of theſe eſpecially, as good as any part of the New Teſtament*. For (1.) *Euſebius* was certainly as proper a Judge of what the Ancients held, as our Author; and yet he plainly ſets the Books we mention'd (*p.* 10.) above all others, and makes *them only* to be Canonical in the Judgment of the generality of his Predeceſſors, And though the Church in the days of (*k*) *Athanaſius*, *Epiphanius*, &c. law Reaſon to take ſome more Books into the Canon, then were admitted by *Euſebius*, yet theſe, we are now conſidering, were ſtill excluded, as we may eaſily ſee in the Catalogues Publiſh'd by thoſe Authors. As to *Barnabas* and *Hermas*, (*l*) *Euſebius* expreſly reckons both of them among thoſe which were judg'd Apocryphal. (*m*) *Athanaſius* and *Rufinus* ſinck the latter into the Rank of *Eccleſiaſtical* Writers, and do not by Name indeed mention the former, but however leaving his Epiſtle out of the Number of Canonical Writings, and *vouching* the

(*k*) *See theſe Authors in the places above cited Sect. IV. n.* 1.

(*l*) *Eccl. Hiſt. l.* 3. *c.* 25.

(*m*) *In the places above cited.*

the Ancients for what they do, plainly ſhow they knew nothing of any of theſe being made equal to the Books of the New Teſtament. (2.) † The Arguments our Author brings to prove the Primitive Fathers look'd upon the four Treatiſes above-mention'd to be as good as any

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† Our Author fetches *a large compaſs* in ſome of his References here, but however, having formerly made ſome remarks of this Nature, in Reading theſe Fathers, I may poſſibly be able to trace him in the Books he directs us to, on this occaſion. I find therefore that *Clemens* of *Alexandria* (*Ed. Par. G. L.* 1641.) cites *Barnabas*, *Stromat. l.2. p.*373,375,396,940. —— *l.* 5. *p.*571,577, 578. —— *Origen* cites him *l.* 1. againſt *Celſus p.* 49. —— *l.* 3. of Principles *c.* 2. *f.* 144. *Edit. Par.* 1522. *Irenæus* quotes *Hermas*, *l.*4.*c.*37 (not *c.*3. as 'tis in our Author) *p.*370.— *Clemens* quotes him, *Strom.l.*1.*p.*311,356.— *l.*2.*p.* 360. —— *l.*4. *p.*503 —— *l.*6. *p.*679. —— *Origen* quotes him, *l.* 1. of Principles *c.* 3. *f.* 117. —— *l.* 2. *c.* 1. *f.* 124. —— *Comment.* on *Hoſ. G. L. p.* 202. Now how fairly the Senſe of theſe places is repreſented, will appear from what follows.

He tells us firſt (*p.* 44.) that *Clemens* of *Alexandria* and *Origen* quote *the Epiſtle of Barnabas*, as *Scripture*; which is not true (though if it was, it ſignify'd nothing:) For in the places referr'd to, they cite it indeed, but under no ſuch Title. He ſays (*p.* 45.) that the *Paſtor of Hermas* is cited as *Canonical Scripture*, by *Ireneus*, *Clemens* of *Alexandria* and *Origen*. *Ireneus* indeed and *Origen* calls it *Scripture*, but not *Canonical*: That's our Authors addition. But *Clemens* does not ſo much as call it *Scripture*, in many of the Places mention'd. What follows concerning the Epiſtles of *Clemens*, Biſhop of *Rome*, *Polycarp* and *Ignatius*, was needleſs. We not only grant, but aſſert that they have been eſteem'd by the Ancients, though not as equal to the Books of the New Teſtament. And I doubt not but they'l continue in the ſame eſtimation, notwithſtanding the mighty attacks, with which they are threatned by this vain boaſter.

part

part of the New Teſtament, are much too weak for that end, for which they are deſign'd. They are in ſhort theſe three, (1.) That the Books are either quoted by the Ancients, or (2.) call'd by the Name of Scripture, or (3.) have been Publickly Read in Churches. Now that the bare quoting an Author does not raiſe him to an equality with the Writers of the Canon, has been already made apparent in Anſwer to the firſt Objection. And as to the Title of *Scripture*, though that be commonly attributed to the Books of the Old and New Teſtament, yet it is ſometimes us'd in a more large and Lax Senſe for any Religious Writings, both by *Ancients*, and *Moderns*. For thus, it is evident from (*n*) *Euſebius*, and own'd by *Melchior Canus* and *Sixtus Senenſis*, that *Origen* caſt all thoſe Books out of the Canon of the Old Teſtament, which are eſteem'd by the Church of *England* for Apocryphal, and yet in his (*o*) Third Homily on the *Canticles*, he expreſly calls the Book of *Wiſdom*, *Scripture*; and ſo he does the *Maccabees* in his (*p*) Second Book of Principles and the firſt Chapter; which (that I may remark that by the way) is the only place of all thoſe nam'd by our Author, where *Origen* gives *that Title* to the *Paſtor of Hermas*, and by joyning it in the ſame appellation with a Book which he expreſly aſſerted to be *Apocryphal*, plainly declares that he did not intend, by aſcribing to it the Name of *Scripture*, to advance it into the honour and Authority of the Canon. Neither did *Tertullian* without doubt, when in his Treatiſe of *Chaſtity*, (*c.* 10.) he calls the ſame Book of *Hermas*, *Scripture*; for he cenſures and inveighs againſt it in the ſame

(*n*) *Eccl. Hiſt. l.* 6. *c.* 25.

(*o*) *F.* 114.

(*p*) *F.* 124

ſame place, and tells us, that it had been condemn'd by more then one Councel of the Catholicks. *Ruſinus* alſo in his Expoſition on the Apoſtles Creed, does not ſcruple the calling even thoſe Treatiſes, *Scripture*, which were forbidden to be Read in the Publick Aſſemblies. And St. *Auguſtine*, in his Work concerning the (q) City of God, tells us there were many Fables contain'd in thoſe *Scriptures*, which are call'd *Apocryphal*. From whence, and from all the other Paſſages before-mention'd it is Evident that the *Title of Scripture* was apply'd by the Ancients to other Writings as well as to thoſe which they judg'd Canonical. And thus too, though our Church has caſt the Books of *Wiſdom*, *Tobit* and *Eccleſiaſticus* out of the Canon, yet ſhe gives them the Appellation of *Scripture*, in the (r) Book of Homilies, and appoints part of them and other *Apocryphal* Books to be Read in Churches, which is a clear proof that the Ancients, by doing the ſame thing, did not declare the pieces, which they ſo Read, to be Canonical or even as good as Canon.

(q) *L.* 15. *c.* 23.

(r) 3*d Serm. againſt the fear of Death, p.* 65. 3*d. Serm. againſt Idolatry p.* 57. 2*d Serm. of Almſ. p.* 160.

And indeed I cannot but wonder how our Author could be guilty of ſuch a miſtake, as to think that the bare Reading of a Book in the Publick Aſſemblies was an Argument, that it was eſteem'd part of the Canon, when not only the Conſtant Practice of our Church, but alſo the poſitive declarations of the Ancients themſelves do in expreſs words teach us the contrary. For thus *Ruſinus* in his Expoſition on the Creed, reckons up ſeveral Books, which he ſays were ſtil'd Eccleſiaſtical and Read Publickly by the Ancients in the Church, but not admitted as of ſufficient Authority to Eſtabliſh

or

or confirm Articles of Faith. The ſame is alſo affirm'd by St. *Jerom*, in his (*s*) Preface to the *Proverbs*, where he tells thoſe to whom he directs it, that the Church Read indeed the Books of *Judith* and *Tobit* and the *Maccabees*, but yet did not look upon them as Canonical; and ſo (adds he) let her Read *Eccleſiaſticus* and the Book of *Wiſdom* for the Edification of the People, but not for the proving of any Doctrines or Eccleſiaſtical Opinions. And thus much too we may gather from *Euſebius*, who (*t*) relates that the firſt Epiſtle of *Clemens*, Biſhop of *Rome*, was Read in moſt Churches, and yet (*u*) he plainly excludes it from being any part of the Canon of the New Teſtament. All which are evident demonſtrations, that it has been an uſual Cuſtom, not only of the Church of *England*, but alſo of Antiquity too, to have ſuch Books Read in Churches for the Inſtruction of the Hearers in Moral Duties, as were never eſteem'd by them to be parts of, or equal to, the Canonical Scripture.

(*s*) 3*d Tome of his Epiſt.* p. 9.

(*t*) *Eccl. Hiſt.* l. 3. c. 16.

(*u*) *L.* 3. c. 25.

What has been ſay'd, I ſuppoſe is ſufficient to ſhow that none of our Authors Arguments anſwer what he deſign'd, or prove that thoſe Fathers whom he quotes, look'd upon the Books above-mention'd to be as good as any part of the New Teſtament. And therefore I ſhall deſire him, when he publiſhes his Hiſtory of the Canon, not to produce either *them*, or *any other*, as *eſteem'd Canonical* in the Judgment of Antiquity, only becauſe they were *cited by the Fathers*, or *call'd Scripture*, or *Read in the Church*. For none of theſe Particulars prove it, as we have now made Evident.

But

VII.

But it may be urg'd, that, though none of the places expreſly ſet down by our Author, do ſufficiently make out that, for which they are produc'd; yet however there is a paſſage of *Origen* in reſerve which will do the Buſineſs. And that is in his Explanation of the Epiſtle to the *Romans*, (*c.* 16. *v.* 15.) where he tells us, that the Paſtor of *Hermas* is an uſeful Book, and, *as he thinks, divinely Inſpir'd.* He does ſay ſo indeed in that place, but then he does not tell us what ſort of Inſpiration he means. There have been different degrees of it in the Opinion of all Men, eſpecially of the Ancients. For thus *Clemens* of *Alexandria* (who was *Origen*'s Inſtructor) promiſes to Write (x) *as God ſhould inſpire him.* And he informs us too, that the Philoſophers, who wrote Truth, did it by *the* (y) *Inſpiration of God*: and yet I dare ſay never dreamt that either his own Writings or theirs ought for that Reaſon, to be taken into the Canon. And we know, *the Divine Plato*, is a common Expreſſion. But I anſwer more directly, (1.) That if *Origen* did look upon this Book as of Divine Authority, the Church in his time was not of the ſame Opinion. For himſelf (z) tells us, that there were thoſe who ſlighted and rejected it, and upon that account he queſtions whether he may venture to draw a Teſtimony from it; and (a) *Tertullian* aſſures us that it had been cenſur'd by every Council of the Catholicks. (2) I think it is plain, that, *Origen*, whatever Character he may have occaſionally given of this Book, did not judge it any part of the Canon, becauſe in the beginning of the *Philocalia*, and particularly (*c.* 6.) we find

(x) *Strom. l.* 4. *p.* 475.

(y) *Admon. to the Gentiles p.* 46, 47.

[z] *Comment. on St. Mat. p.* 361. *Philoc. c.* 1. *p.* 9.

[a] *Of Chaſtity c.* 10.

find him ſeveral times diſtinguiſhing the Books of the New Teſtament into the Writings of the *Evangeliſts* and *Apoſtles*. Now 'tis certain that the Paſtor of *Hermas* can be reduc'd to neither of theſe heads, and therefore in the Judgment of *Origen* * was not Canonical. If it be ask'd to which of theſe two Claſſes we aſſign the Acts of the Apoſtles, I anſwer to that of the Evangeliſts, as being the Work of one of them; and that *Origen* intended ſo to do, and have it reckon'd among the Books that were part of the Canon, is apparent from hence, that he Wrote *Homilies* thereon, which neither he nor any of the Fathers did upon *Barnabas*, *Hermas*, *Clemens* or any other of the *Eccleſiaſtical* or *Apocryphal* Pieces under the *New Teſtament*. But we need not uſe any Argument in the caſe. *Origen* himſelf expreſly aſcribes the *Acts of the Apoſtles* to St. *Luke* more then once, and reckons them by Name among the *other Books of the New Teſtament*, in his Seventh *Homily* on *Joſhua* (*f.* 156.) where *none* of the *Apocryphal*, *none* of the *Eccleſiaſtical* Books are joyn'd with them.

However it may not be amiſs to add upon this occaſion, that if a ſingle Father, or two, have had a higher Opinion of a Book then it did deſerve, or a wrong Opinion of the Author, this will not overthrow the Argument, upon which the Divine Authority of the Books of the *New*

* If we look into the *Philocalia* (*c.* 1. *p.* 9.) we may there obſerve that *Origen* does not ſpeak of the Paſtor of *Hermas* with the ſame Honour and Reſpect, that he does of the genuine parts of the Canon.

Teſtament

Teſtament is built. We look upon them as Divine and ſtrictly binding to Obedience, becauſe they were either wrote or confirm'd by the Apoſtles of our Saviour, and we believe that they were ſo wrote or confirm'd by them, not upon the Teſtimonies of one or two Fathers only, but of the whole Primitive Church, who were capable of Judging in this queſtion. Our Author prevaricates, if he'd perſwade us, that the Ancients form'd their Judgment in this matter, only upon the Tradition of one or two Perſons, or even of thoſe few Treatiſes of the Ancient Writers, which are now Extant. Theſe indeed they appeal to, and that juſtly, but beſides theſe, there were great Numbers more in being in thoſe days which ((*b*) as well as the ſeveral Churches which were the depoſitaries of the ſeveral Epiſtles and Goſpels) they conſulted, and were from thence enabled to determine whether this or that Book was Genuine or no. If any one doubt this, I ſhall ſend him, as our Author does Mr. *Blackall*, to Dr. *Cave*, *Du Pin*, &c. where he may learn, that all the Works of ſome, and many Treatiſes of others, of the moſt Ancient Fathers, are now periſh'd, which yet were every where to be had in the days of *Euſebius*, *Athanaſius*, *Epiphanius* and *Rufinus* and their Predeceſſors and by the aſſiſtance of which they and the Church in their times, judg'd the ſeveral Books of the *New Teſtament* to have been indeed wrote by thoſe Perſons, to whom we aſcribe them.

[*b*] *See Tertul. of Preſcript. c.* 36.

From

VIII. From hence it may appear, how trifling and impertinent the Raillery is, which our Author (*p.* 57.) flings upon the Council of *Laodicea*. They were indeed the firſt Publick Aſſembly, that we know of, which Eſtabliſh'd, by a Solemn Decree, the *Canon* of the *Old* and *New Teſtament*, ſuch as the Church of *England* now Embraces (excepting only the *Revelation*) about the Year 360. This they were enabled to do, whatever our Author pretends to the contrary, by the Teſtimony of their Predeceſſors. There was no need of a Particular Revelation, no need of Oral Tradition neither, at that time, as he would Inſinuate. There were numerous Books abroad in the Church, ſome of which are now loſt and ſome we ſtill have. By the help of them they were Inſtructed how to form a right Judgment, how to diſtinguiſh what was Genuine from what was Spurious; *moſt of this latter ſort alſo having been already diſcover'd and rejected to their hands, as is apparent from Euſebius.* Though our Author ſeems to have forgot that, when he was Reflecting upon this Venerable Aſſembly.

IX. He urges (*p.* 47.) that he can't underſtand, why the Writings of St. *Mark* and St. *Luke* ſhould be receiv'd into the *Canon*, and thoſe of St. *Clemens* Biſhop of *Rome* and St. *Barnabas* excluded, by thoſe who look upon them as Genuine. Since the two former were not *Apoſtles*, but only Companions and Fellow-Labourers with the *Apoſtles*, and ſo were the two latter as well as they.

In

In Anſwer to this, I ſhall tell our Author, that if he had Read thoſe Books he pretends to quote, he might have found a reply to this Objection before he made it. For in the beginning of that Diſſertation of Mr. *Dodwell*, from whence he cites ſo long a Paſſage, that Learned Man would have inform'd him (*Sect.* 5.) that the compilers of our Canon deſign'd only to take in the Writings of the Apoſtles, whoſe Authority was unqueſtionable, and that they took in the Goſpels of St. *Mark* and St. *Luke*, not barely upon their own account, but upon that of St. *Peter* and St. *Paul*, whoſe Companions and Fellow-labourers they were, and * who atteſted their Inſpiration and Fidelity in what they Wrote. And this may be eaſily prov'd from the Teſtimony of the Fathers. For thus, *Tertullian* in his Fourth Book againſt *Marcion* (*c.* 5.) tells us, *The Goſpel, which* Mark *Publiſh'd, is affirm'd to be* Peter's, *and that which was drawn up by* Luke, *is aſcrib'd to* Paul. And we learn from (*c*) *Euſebius*, that both *Papias* and *Clemens* of *Alexandria* atteſted, that the *Romans*

(*c*) *Eccl. Hiſt. l.* 2. *c.* 15.

* The Atteſtation of a Perſon, of whoſe Prophetick Spirit there was no queſtion, was one way of being certify'd concerning the Divine Miſſion of a Prophet among the *Jews*. According to that Maxim of the Maſters, *A Prophet of whom ſome other undoubted Prophet Witneſſeth that he is a Prophet, is aſſuredly a Prophet. See Dr.* Spencer *of Vulgar Prophecies, c.* 4. This ſeems to have been exactly the caſe of St. *Mark* and St. *Luke*. Their Writings were Authoriz'd and their Inſpiration thereby atteſted by the Apoſtles, who were undoubtedly inſpir'd, and therefore we may ſafely conclude, that theſe two Evangeliſts were inſpir'd likewiſe.

having prevail'd with St. *Mark* to Write his Goſpel, what he had done was reveal'd to St. *Peter* by the Holy Ghoſt, who thereupon Authoriz'd the Work and appointed it to be Read Publickly in the Church. And the ſame

[d] *L.* 6. *c.* 25. (*d*) Hiſtorian informs us from *Origen*, that St. *Paul* approv'd and recommended the Goſpel of St. *Luke*, † being drawn up principally for the uſe of the Gentiles. To which may be added

[e] *L.* 3. *c.* 24. what he tells us in (*e*) another Place, that the three other Goſpels being brought to St. *John*, he Read them over and Perus'd them carefully, and when he had ſo done, juſtified what they had wrote and confirm'd the Truth thereof with his own Teſtimony. Though, for Reaſons there ſet down, he thought fit to make another Relation of his own, and add thereto ſuch Particulars as had been omitted by the others. *The Acts of the Apoſtles* (as Mr. *Dodwell* obſerves, *Sect.* 39.) were probably wrote by St. *Luke* at the ſame time with the *Goſpel* or Hiſtory of our Saviour, and therefore fall under the ſame Conſideration. They were the Second Volum, Part, or Treatiſe of the ſame Book (as appears from *Acts* 1. 1.) and therefore though St. *Luke*'s Name was not put to them, yet it was never doubted in the Church, who was the Author.

† St. *Jerom* (*in his Catalogue of Eccleſiaſtical Writers* in *Luke*) tells us, that many ſuppos'd that when St. *Paul* ſpoke of his own Goſpel (*Rom.* 2. 16. 2 *Tim.* 2. 8.) he meant that of St. *Luke*. And he informs us alſo before (*in Simon Peter*) that the Goſpel according to St. *Mark* was ſay'd to be St. *Peters*: That is, I ſuppoſe, Wrote by his Inſtruction, and with his Approbation.

His

His Name was prefix'd to, learnt from, and preſerv'd in, the firſt part, the Goſpel: from which the *Acts* ſeem afterwards to have been ſeparated, (though at firſt they went together) for the convenience of the Readers, that ſo the Goſpels all making up one Book by themſelves (as was uſual formerly under the Name of the Book of the Goſpels) might be the more eaſily compar'd together. Now this makes a great difference between the Writings of theſe two Evangeliſts and thoſe of St. *Clemens* and St. *Barnabas*, though ſuppos'd Genuine. Theſe latter were never recommended or atteſted by any of the Apoſtles, and therefore could never expect that Reception and Authority in the World, which the others found, nor to have the ſame place in the *Canon*.

IV. We Read (*p.* 56.) in ſo many words, X. that *there is not one ſingle Book of the New Teſtament, which was not refus'd by ſome of the Ancients, as unjuſtly Father'd upon the Apoſtles, and really forg'd by their Adverſaries.* To which I anſwer, That either our Author Equivocates, in this Place, or aſſerts that which he can never prove to be true. For as I ſhow'd above (*p.* 10, *&c.*) the four Goſpels, the Acts, thirteen Epiſtles of St. *Paul*, the firſt of St. *Peter* and the firſt of St. *John*, were all along admitted by the Catholick Church, and never, that appears, after a ſufficient Promulgation, oppos'd by any who held her Communion. The Hereticks indeed rejected, ſome, one, ſome, other parts of the New Teſtament, but to underſtand *them only*, by the Word, *Ancients*, excluſively of the Catholicks, was certainly deſign'd to impoſe upon the unwary Reader, and can never be excus'd

from foul dealing, ſince that Expreſſion is commonly taken in another Senſe.

But perhaps it may be here ask'd, why the Teſtimony of Hereticks, in a matter of Fact, ſhould not be as good as that of Catholicks, and why they may not be admitted as Witneſſes of what Books were or ought to be eſteem'd Canonical, as well as others.

To this I anſwer (1.) That the Catholicks gave clear and evident proof of the Truth of what they aſſerted, when the Hereticks could give none that was of any value. For as we learn from (*f*) *Irenæus*, (*g*) *Tertullian* and others, All the Churches, which had been planted by the Apoſtles, and thoſe who held Communion with them, were on their ſide. Theſe all agreed in the Books, theſe all agreed in the ſame Goſpels and Epiſtles, which they affirm'd, they had receiv'd in a certain ſucceſſion from the firſt Age. The Tradition was every where the ſame, as to the Books mention'd (*p.* 19.) and might well be eſteem'd undoubted, ſince they were no further remov'd from the Diſciples of our Saviour in the days of *Irenæus*, then we are now from our Grandfathers. The Biſhops and Churches of his time convey'd the *Canon* by Written as well as Oral Teſtimony to the next Ages, and ſo enabled them to run down the Forgeries of Hereticks, as they had done before them; who could not give that Proof and Evidence for their Suppoſitions, which the Catholicks did for their True and Genuine Writings. They could not deduce them from the

(*f*) *l.* 4. *c.* 63.

(*g*) *l.* 4. *againſt Marcion c.* 4. *Of Preſcription c.* 36. *See theſe places inſiſted on hereafter Sect.* XXXIV.

the Apoſtles, ſince (*b*) the Founders of the ſeveral Sects, the Authors of theſe Hereſies, Forgeries and Corruptions, (as *Valentinus*, *Baſilides*, *Apelles*, *Marcion*, &c.) were much latter then they. And when application was made to the moſt Ancient Churches in the World, which the immediate Diſciples of our Lord had taught in their own Perſons, or to thoſe which joyn'd in Communion with them, they all gave in their Teſtimonies both againſt the Books and Doctrin. And this brings me to a Second Argument. (2.) (*i*) The Books which the Hereticks forg'd, contradicted that Doctrin which the Apoſtles had taught in the Churches they planted. This was ſufficiently known in thoſe Ages (which were at ſo little a diſtance from our Saviour) by the general Tradition of all the Churches in the World. And therefore thoſe * Books were juſtly concluded Authentick, that (beſides good Teſtimony) agreed with, and thoſe Suppoſititious, which were repugnant to, the Doctrin of the Apoſtles. (3.) Theſe Arguments have been judg'd ſo convincing, that the whole Chriſtian World has given a Verdict on their ſide. For the Doctrin of moſt of the Primitive Hereticks has appear'd ſo Monſtrous

(*b*) *Irenæus l.* 3. *c.* 4. *l.* 5. *c.* 20. *Tertul. of Preſcript. c.* 29, 30. *Clem. Alex. Strom. l.* 7. *p.* 764.

(*i*) *Iren. l.* 1. *c.* 17. *Coll. cum. l.* 3. *c.* 2, *&c. Tertull. of Preſcript. c.* 32, 38. *See alſo Euſeb. Eccl. Hiſt. l.* 3. *c.* 25. *at the end. See theſe places out of Ireneus and Tertullian inſiſted on more fully hereafter. Sect. XXXIV.*

* *Euſebius* (*l.* 3. *c.* 25.) tells us that ſeveral Books Publiſh'd under the Venerable Names of St. *Peter*, St. *Thomas*, St. *Matthias*, *&c.* were and ought to be rejected as Spurious, for this Reaſon (among others) that they contain'd Doctrins contrary to thoſe which had been Taught and Publiſh'd by the Apoſtles; whence it was Evident that they were the Forgeries and Contrivances of Wicked Men.

and Extravagant, the Books, which they forg'd to aſſert it, ſo ill atteſted, that the one has now been rejected every where for many hundreds of years, and the other condemn'd and in a manner quite vaniſh'd. Whereas the *Doctrin of the Catholicks maintain'd it ſelf under the ſharpeſt Perſecutions*, and *their Books were preſerv'd* † *when it was Death to keep them*, and ſo both have been convey'd together to the preſent time, notwithſtanding all oppoſition.

XI. Our Author tells us again (*p.* 56.) *That the Epiſtle to the* Hebrews, *that of St.* James, *the Second of St.* Peter, *the Second and Third of St.* John, *the Epiſtle of St.* Jude *and the* Revelation *were a long time plainly doubted by the Ancients.* And as if that had not been enough, he adds (*p.* 64.) *that they were rejected a long time by* all *Chriſtians, almoſt with Univerſal conſent.* But to this I have ſpoken already (*p.* 14, *&c.*) and therefore think it neceſſary to add no more, by way of Anſwer, in this place, then what a Learned Man has ſay'd concerning the Epiſtle of St. *James*, which may with equal Reaſon be apply'd to all the reſt of theſe once controverted

† See *the Paſſion of Felix, Biſhop of Tubyza in Africa*, who was put to Death in the year 303, becauſe he would not deliver the Scriptures to be burnt, according to the expreſs Decree of *Dioclefian* and *Maximian*, the Emperours, to that purpoſe. Many others alſo ſuffer'd on that account, and they, who, for fear of Death, did deliver the Scriptures to the Heathen, were called *Traditores* (whence our *Engliſh* word, *Traitors*) and fell under the Churches Cenſure, as is notoriouſly evident from the famous caſe of *Cecilian* and the *Donatiſts*.

Pieces:

Pieces: *Though the Ancients have been divided as to this point, it is enough that the ſucceeding Ages, after a due Reflection on this matter, have found in Antiquity certain Acts, ſufficient to place them in the rank of the Canonical Books of the New Teſtament, and that all Churches in the World, have, ſince that, receiv'd them as ſuch.* However before I diſmiſs this Objection, it will not be improper to take a little notice of our Authors Ingenuity, and conſider with what truth he could affirm, that theſe Books *were rejected for a long time by* all *Chriſtians, almoſt with an univerſal conſent.* The contrary to which will appear Evident, if we produce thoſe, who own'd them (during the time he ſays they were ſo rejected) as the Genuine Writings of the Authors under whoſe Names they are now Publiſh'd and Read in the Church of *England.*

The Epiſtle to the Hebrews, own'd *as St. Paul's*, by *Clemens* of *Alexandria* in his *Stromata*, (*l.* 4. *p.*514.) —— by *Origen* in his Comment on St. *John*, (*G. L. To.* 2. *p.*56.)—— He affirmed, as we find in the Eccleſiaſtical Hiſtory of * *Euſebius* (*l.* 6. *c.* 25.) that *many of the Ancients* believ'd it to be

* It would have been an eaſy matter to have produc'd *ſeveral* Paſſages of moſt of the Fathers here alleg'd, to prove that they held the reſpective Books, for which they are quoted, Canonical, or Genuine Writings of thoſe Apoſtles to whom they are aſcrib'd. But I wav'd that as needleſs; and thought one Teſtimony ſufficient to ſhow the Judgment of one Writer. Otherwiſe I could have brought more then Twenty Places of *Origen* (for Example's ſake) to ſhow that he held the Epiſtle to the *Hebrews* to have been Wrote by St. *Paul*, four or five from *Clemens* of *Alexandria*, &c. I could alſo have produc'd other Authors, in whom Paſſages out of theſe Pieces are made uſe of, without naming the Books, from which they are borrow'd; but that did not anſwer my deſign.

St. *Paul*'s. *Eusebius* (*l.* 3. *c.* 3.) says it was rejected only *by some*, and *seems* to have admitted it into the *Canon* with the rest, *for his own part*, (*l.* 3. *c.* 25, and 38.) St. *Jerome* in his Epistle to *Dardanus* (*f.* 24.) says that it was receiv'd by *most* of the Ancients, and quoted by them as *Canonical Scripture*. I don't produce the Testimony of St. *Jerome* upon his own account, in this place, either for this *Epistle* or for the *Revelation*; but only as he informs us what was the belief *of most of the Ancients* in the case before us. (*k*) The *Ancient Syriack Version* has this Epistle and (*l*) ascribes it to St. *Paul*.

(*k*) *See before p.* 18.

(*l*) *F. Simons Critical History of the N. Test Part.* 2. *c.* 15. *p.* 140.

The † *Epistle of St. James*, was own'd as that

† Some will have St. *James*, the Author of this Epistle, to be a distinct Person from the two Apostles of that Name. They say that there was a *Third*, the Brother of our Lord and Bishop of *Jerusalem* and that *he* Wrote this Epistle. To which I answer (1.) That the Scripture no where mentions any more then *two* of this Name, and St. *Paul* (*Gal.* 1. 19.) tells us expresly, that *James*, *the Brother of our Lord* was an *Apostle*. (2.) *Clemens* of *Alexandria* and *Eusebius* from him (*Eccl. Hist. l.* 2. *c.* 1.) reckon no more then two, one *James* the Son of *Zebedee*, and the other *James* call'd the Just, the Brother of our Lord, who was also Bishop of *Jerusalem*. The same is asserted by *Epiphanius*, (*Heres.* 29. *n.* 3.) and St. *Jerome* against *Helvidius* (*f.* 10.) So that since there were but two, call'd by the Name of *James*, and both of them, Apostles, let which of them can, be the Author of the Epistle, it was certainly wrote by an *Apostle*. Though it is generally concluded to be *that James*, who was our Lord's Brother (probably so stil'd, either because the Son of *Joseph* by a former Wife, or the Son of the Virgin *Mary*'s Sister, as St. *Jerome* will have it;) for the other *James*, the Son of *Zebedee* was kill'd by *Herod* at the first planting of the Church. And therefore to *this James*, *Rufinus* expresly ascribes it in his Exposition of the Apostles Creed, calling him *Apostle and Brother of our Lord*. See Dr. *Cave*'s Life of St. *James* the Less.

Apostles,

Apoſtle's, by *Origen* (in his Eighth Homily on *Exodus*, *f.* 43.) —— *Euſebius* (in his *Eccleſiaſtical Hiſtory*, *l.* 3. *c.* 25.) ſays it was approv'd *by many*. The *Ancient Syriack Verſion* has this Epiſtle.

The Second Epiſtle of St. Peter, own'd as his by *Origen* (in his Seventh Homily on *Joſhua*, *f.* 156.) and by *Firmilian of Cappadocia* (in his Epiſtle to St. *Cyprian*, among the Epiſtles of that Father, *Ep.* 85. *p.* 220.) *Euſebius* ſays the ſame of this as of the Epiſtle of St. *James*, and in the ſame place.

The Second Epiſtle of St. John, own'd as that Apoſtles by *Ireneus* (*l.* 1. *c.* 13. *p.*95.) by *Clemens of Alexandria* who wrote a ſhort Explanation of it, (which ſee at the end of his Treatiſe concerning *the Salvation of the Rich. Ox. Edit. p.* 142.) by a Council at *Carthage* (in the year 256, among St. *Cyprians* Tracts. *p.* 242.) *Dionyſius of Alexandria* mentions this *Second* and alſo the *Third* Epiſtle as *commonly aſcrib'd* to St. *John* the Apoſtle, in his time, about the year 260 (*Euſeb. Eccl. Hiſt. l.* 7. *c.* 25.) *Euſebius* ſays the ſame of this, as of the Epiſtle of St. *James*.

The Third Epiſtle of St. John. (*n*) *Origen* allowes that both *it* and the *Second* might be admitted as the Apoſtles, and plainly acknowledges that *many* receiv'd both as Genuine, when he ſays that *all* did not. (See *Euſeb. l.* 6. *c.* 25.) *Dionyſius* ſays the *ſame* of *this*, that he does of the *Second*; and *Euſebius* the ſame that he ſays of St. *James*'s Epiſtle.

(*n*) *See alſo his Seventh Homily on* Joſhua *f.* 156.

The

The Epiſtle of * *St. Jude*, own'd as his by *Tertullian* (*l.* 1. Of the Ornament of Women, *c.* 3.) by *Clemens of Alexandria* (in his *Pedagogue l.* 3. *c.* 8. *p.* 239.) by *Origen* (in his Comment. on St. *Matthew*, *Tom.* 11. *p.* 223.) *Euſebius* ſays the ſame of this, that he does of St. *James*.

The Revelation, aſcrib'd to St. *John* the Apoſtle, by *Juſtin M.* (in his Dialogue with *Trypho. p* 308.) by (*o*) *Ireneus* (*l.* 4. *c.* 37. *p.* 373.) by *Clemens of Alexandria* (in his *Stromata l.* 6. *p.* 667.) by *Origen* (in his Commentary on St. *Matthew*, *Tom.* 16. *p.* 417.) by *Tertullian* (*l.* 3. againſt *Marcion c.* 14, and 23.) By St. *Cyprian* (in his Treatiſe of the Benefit of Patience) to *John*, without any Epithet; who quotes this Book, I believe, a hundred times. St. *Jerome* in his Epiſtle to *Dardanus* (*f.* 24.) ſays that it was receiv'd by *moſt of the Ancients*, as *Canonical*, and that they cited Teſtimonies from it *as ſuch*.

(*o*) *See hereafter Sect. XXV.*

From what has been here alledg'd, I ſuppoſe it is evident, that there were thoſe (*many* of

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* That St *Jude* was an Apoſtle is evident from the firſt Verſe of his Epiſtle; for there he ſtiles himſelf, *the Brother of James*. And that there was *a Jude or Judas* (for both are the ſame in the Original) *the Brother of James*, among the Apoſtles, appears from St. *Luke* 6. 16. and *Acts* 1. 13. He is call'd *Lebbeus whoſe Surname was Thaddeus* by St. *Matthew* (*c.* 10. *v.* 3.) the reaſon of which ſee in Dr. *Cave*'s Hiſtory of his Life.

thoſe

thoſe, and they *very conſiderable* Perſons too) who are now known to have own'd the Authority of the controverted Books, † even before they were *generally* receiv'd by the *whole* Church. All the Reflection I intend to make upon it, ſhall be only this, that we may certainly expect a very accurate and impartial *Hiſtory of the Canon* from our Author, who takes not the leaſt notice of all theſe Places, but notwithſtanding them and others of the ſame Nature, had yet the confidence to ſay, that *theſe ſeven Pieces were rejected a long time* (even in that time, wherein the Authors I have now quoted, liv'd) *by* all *Chriſtians*, *almoſt with univerſal Conſent*. Such as have a mind, may take his word for it, if they pleaſe. But, I believe, few, who ſhall conſult the quotations produc'd above, will admire him either for an exact or faithful Hiſtorian.

But however, before I proceed any further, I muſt obſerve that I find him here in a complying humour, and becauſe he is ſeldom ſo, I XII.

† It muſt be here alſo remembred (what was obſerved before *Sect. IV. n.* 1.) that *Athanaſius and Ruſinus appeal to the Ancients* for theſe Pieces, as well as for the reſt of the New Teſtament, and do it after ſuch a manner as informs us, that they found *ſo many* of their Predeceſſors citeing and owning them for Authentick, and upon *ſo good grounds*, as made them too, without ſcruple, acknowledge them all for the Genuine Writings of thoſe to whom they are aſcribed. And this (*I mean the Teſtimonies of the Ancients, both Particular Fathers, and Churches*) was undoubtedly the ground upon which they were at length received every where.

think

think my ſelf oblig'd to take notice of it. For he acknowledges (*p.* 57.) that *theſe ſeven Pieces are now receiv'd* (*not without convincing Arguments*) *by the Moderns.* Thus far is very well; and I ſhould have been glad to find our Author ſo frank in his conceſſions, if what he grants, had not been attended with a ſting in the Tail. For it follows, *Now I ſay, by more then a parity of Reaſon, that the Preaching and Revelation of* Peter (*for Example*) *were receiv'd by the Ancients, and ought not to be rejected by the Moderns, if the approbation of the Fathers be a proper recommendation of any Book.* The ſhort of the Buſineſs is this; that, in our Authors Opinion, there's more reaſon to look upon the *Revelation and Preaching* of St. *Peter* as Canonical, then the Seven Pieces above-mention'd, which are now embrac'd by the whole Church as ſuch. We'll try if you pleaſe, and turning back to *p.* 22, conſider what Teſtimonies are there brought to prove theſe Treatiſes, which bear the Name of St. *Peter*, to have been formerly eſteem'd Genuine.

Firſt, for his *Revelation*, we find that it's quoted by *Clemens* of *Alexandria*; mention'd by *Euſebius*, St. *Jerome*, and *Sozomen*. All this I grant, but then muſt beg leave to add, that none of theſe Writers, excepting the firſt, will do our Authors cauſe any manner of Service. For *Euſebius* and St. *Jerome* expreſly declare this Piece (as alſo the *Preaching* too) to be Spurious; and *Sozomen* aſſures us, that though it was indeed Read in ſome Churches of *Paleſtine* once in the year, yet the Ancients abſolutely judg'd it a Forgery.

As

As for the *Preaching of Peter*, *Clemens* of *Alexandria* I own, quotes it ſeveral times, and he's the only Perſon I can allow that does as much as ſeem to favour our Author in the preſent controverſy; excepting only *Damaſcen*, whom I have not at hand, and therefore can't ſay what his Opinion might be. *Origen* ſays not a word of it in the Preface to his Treatiſe of * *Principles*, (as is pretended.) He does indeed in his 14*th Tome* on St. *John*, but then he conſiders the Paſſage there alledg'd as an Objection urg'd by *Heracleon*, and is very far, as any one may perceive, from owning the Authority of the Book. *Lactantius* (*p*) tells us (in the place cited) that the Apoſtles *Peter* and *Paul* Preach'd at *Rome*, and deliver'd ſeveral Prophecies againſt the *Jews*, which were kept in Writing and confirm'd by the Event. But he does not ſay, that the Book wherein they were preſerv'd, was call'd the *Preaching of Peter*, neither does it any other ways appear that ſuch Prophecies were contain'd in the Book now before us, and therefore his Teſtimony ſignifies nothing to the queſtion in hand. As for the *Diſcourſe concerning the Baptiſm of Hereticks*, among the Works of St. *Cyprian*, I grant the *Preaching of Peter* is there quoted, if we'll allow the conjecture of *Rigaltius* †, that *Paul* is by miſtake ſet for *Peter*,

(*p*) *L.* 4. *c.* 21.

* The *Doctrin* indeed *of St. Peter* is mention'd there, but rejected as an Apocryphal Book, neither Wrote by him, whoſe Name it bears, nor by any Inſpir'd Perſon.

† I could not but ſmile here at the ingenuity of our Author, in his contrivance to multiply Teſtimonies for *Spurious Pieces*. For he alledges (*p.* 32.) this Writer to prove there was a Book call'd the *Preaching of St. Paul*, becauſe it is *actually ſo* in the Text. And he quotes the very ſame place (*p.* 23.) for the *Preaching of St. Peter*, becauſe *Rigaltius corrects it* ſo in his Notes.

for

for 'tis *Paul* in the Text. But what will our Author get by this Conceſſion? Truly very little; he may put it all in his Eye and ſee never the worſe. For that Writer ſays poſitively, that the Compoſer of the *Preaching of Peter* was an Heretick, and proves it too by good Arguments. So that after all, * we have the Teſtimony of one ſingle Father, and an obſcure

* I ſay we have the Teſtimony but of one ſingle Father for any Authority of theſe Books (for the Reading one of them *once* a year in an obſcure Church or two, is a mean thing; ſee above *Sect. VI.*) And yet under what notion he quotes them does not appear; much leſs what Authority he aſcribes to them. He no where tells us that he look'd upon the *Preaching and Revelation of St. Peter* to have been Wrote by himſelf and upon that account to be *Canonical*. He might take them for *Eccleſiaſtical* Pieces, and ſuppoſe (which yet was an Error) that the Writer of them gave a true account of ſome Diſcourſes of that Apoſtle. As he does in his Treatiſe, *concerning the Salvation of the Rich*, furniſh us with ſome Paſſages concerning St. *John*, which *Euſebius* has transfer'd into his *Eccleſiaſtical Hiſtory*. It can by no means be prov'd that this Father judg'd theſe Pieces part of the New Teſtament, *becauſe he quotes them*. It was the cuſtom of the Ancients (as well as Moderns) to cite Writings, which they knew, *not to be Canonical*, as well as thoſe that were. This is ſufficiently Evident, and St. *Jerom* takes Particular notice of it in his Epiſtle to *Dardanus*. And therefore till there be very good proof to the contrary, we ought not to believe that St. *Clemens* differ'd *ſo very far* from the reſt of the Fathers, as to advance thoſe Pieces into the Canon, which they generally rejected for *Spurious*; but rather conclude, that he eſteem'd them *at beſt* no more then Eccleſiaſtical. And ſo *Euſebius* ſeems to affirm concerning him and them. See hereafter *Sect. XIX.* However the caſe be, ſee before *Sect. VII.*

Church

Church or two in *Paleſtine* only, for *any Authority* of theſe Books, and what Authority they deſign'd them, we cannot tell, and all the reſt of the Catholicks of thoſe times, and before them, and ſince (as far as appears) rejected them as Forgeries; and if we may make an Eſtimate of the whole by the Fragments, which yet remain, 'tis evident they were the Forgeries of Hereticks. For in the (q) *Preaching of Peter*, we Read, that the *Jews Worſhipp'd Angels, and Archangels and the Months and the Moon.* Which they are charg'd with doing, not when they fell into Idolatry, but in the ordinary Practice of their Religion. We are told alſo (r) that *Jeſus acknowledg'd himſelf guilty of Sin, and was in a manner compell'd to ſubmit to the Baptiſm of* John, *by his Mother, againſt his will*, &c. which are groſs and † notorious falſhoods. And the *Revelation of* Peter *informs us, that* (s) *abortive and expos'd Infants are committed to the conduct of a Guardian Angel, who may inſtruct and educate them, and ſecure their Happineſs after they have ſuffer'd ſuch things as they ſhould have endur'd in the Body; that they ſhall be as thoſe who have been faithful here for a hundred years; that flaſhes of fire ſhall break from theſe Infants*, &c. with more of the ſame Nature. Now whoſo-

(q) *See Clem. Alex. Strom. l. 6. p. 635. Orig. Tom. 14. on John p. 211.*

(r) *Treatiſe of Bapt. of Heret. p. 30.*

(s) *Clem. Al. Extracts out of Theodot. p. 806, 807.*

† There is another paſſage, that does not (methinks) ſound well, quoted by *Clemens*, out of the *Preaching of St. Peter*, in the ſixth Book of his *Stromata* (p. 678.) where we are told, that *the Prophets nam'd Jeſus Chriſt in expreſs words.* Whether this can be fairly reconcil'd with Truth, I ſhall not determine, but leave to the Reader's Judgment.

ever

ever ſhall conſider this, and call to mind the perfect ſilence of the Scripture in ſuch Curioſities, will eaſily conclude that theſe diſcoveries had the ſame Original with the Whimſical Fancies, which the *Gnoſticks* Publiſh'd to the World about that time.

The caſe therefore of the Books call'd, the *Preaching and Revelation of St. Peter*, is, in a Word, this. They contain'd falſe and Extravagant Doctrin, have no Body on their ſide *at all* but one Father and ſome unknown Churches of *Paleſtine* (whoſe juſt opinion of them we know not,) and were univerſally rejected by the whole Body of the Catholicks beſides, as far as we can Judge at this diſtance. Now let's turn the Tables, and we ſhall find the whole Chriſtian World agreed that there is nothing in the Seven Pieces, which we have now under conſideration, repugnant to the reſt of the Scripture; that even at that time, when they were doubted of by *ſome*, they were yet receiv'd by *many* others; among whom were ſeveral of great Piety and Learning; that *Athanaſius*, *Ruſinus*, and others vouch the Authority of the Ancients to prove that they were and ought to be judg'd and accounted Canonical; that ſince that, Councils and the whole Church have receiv'd and own'd them for Genuine, and if, after all this, our Author will ſtill ſay, that there's more reaſon to receive *the Preaching and Revelation of St. Peter*, then the Pieces we are now examining, into the Code of the New Teſtament, he may ſay ſo, if he pleaſes; but I believe he'l meet with but few that are of his Opinion.

VI. To

VI. To ſhow he'll leave no Stone unturn'd to expreſs the favourable Opinion he has of the *New Teſtament*, our Author brings in *Celſus* a Heathen (*p.* 60.) as a Witneſs againſt the Chriſtians, *who exclaims againſt the too great Liberty they took* (*as if they were drunk*) *of changing the firſt Writing of the Goſpel, three or four or more times, that ſo they might deny whatever was urg'd againſt them, as retracted before.* Our Author ſomewhere complains of the Clergy for their harſh Language, and violating the Rules of Decency and Civility in their Writings. But certainly there are ſome caſes, wherein it is very difficult to forbear a little ſeverity of Expreſſion. And this I take to be one of them, which I have now before me. To ſee a Man, who profeſſes himſelf a Chriſtian, rake up the Objections, not only of the groſſeſt and moſt Profligate Hereticks, but even of the very Heathens, and make uſe of them to run down the moſt Ancient and Venerable Monuments of our Religion, might eaſily raiſe a Paſſion, juſtifiable by the ſtricteſt Rules of Morality. Eſpecially when we find the ſame Perſon ſo reſolutely bent on doing all the miſchief that he can, as to take not the leaſt notice of the anſwer, which is to be found in the ſame place from whence he drew his Objection. For this Objection is quoted by our Author from the Second Book of *Origen* againſt *Celſus* (*p.* 77.) and there he might have found this anſwer too, that they were the *Hereticks*, the *Marcionites*, the *Valentinians*, and the *Lucianiſts* (ſome of whom alſo (*t*) *Irenæus* and (*u*) *Tertullian* poſitively accuſe of the ſame tricks) who were guilty of theſe Prevarications. For which the XIII.

(*s*) *Lib. 1. c.* 29.

(*u*) *Adv. Marcion l.* 4. *c.* 5.

Catholicks were no more anſwerable then the Church of *England* was for the Murther of *Charles* the Firſt.

XIV. VII. To *Celſus*, in the ſame Page, our Author joyns the *Manicheans* (fitly enough I confeſs) *who ſhew'd other Scriptures and deny'd the Genuineneſs of the whole New Teſtament.*

Whether will not Men go, or what will they not do, to ſerve a deſign? He knows, or at leaſt might know, that the *Manicheans* were as Extravagant and Whimſical a ſort of Hereticks as any that troubled the Chriſtian Church. They held, as (x) *Epiphanius* informs us, *That there were two Supreme Gods, the one, a good, the other, a bad one; that they were always at War with one another; that Manes was the Holy Ghoſt; that the Souls of Men, after their deceaſe, ſhould paſs into the Bodies of ſuch Beaſts as they had Eaten when they were alive, or be united to thoſe Trees which they had planted; that the Sun and Moon were Ships, which convey'd the faithful of their Sect to Heaven,* and that *the Light of the Moon depended on the number of the Souls in it, which, when ſhe was full, ſhe emptied into the Sun by degrees, and ſo grew dark again.* Theſe things they believ'd, or at leaſt maintain'd, with Twenty more of as abſurd a Nature. And now, I pray, what does the Opinion, which ſuch as theſe had of the Canon, ſignify? They could find nothing in the Books of the Catholicks, wherewith to juſtify their Notions, and therefore (w) rejected their Authority, and made uſe of others for their peculiar Doctrins. But our Author might as well have ſet up the *Alchoran* in oppoſition to the *New Teſtament*, and for ſo doing have alledg'd the Judgment

(x) *Heref.* 66.

(w) *S. Aug. Treatiſe of Hereſies.* 46.

Judgment and Teſtimony, of the *Turks*. For laying aſide the Name, they ſeem to be every jot as good Chriſtians as the *Manicheans*.

Here our Author brings in two Paſſages from *Fauſtus the Manichee*, to ſhow that He and thoſe of his Sect rejected the whole *New Teſtament*. That they did ſo *in effect*, is evident and undoubted; for they made it of *no Authority*, by refuſing to be concluded by Arguments drawn from thence, pretending that it contain'd many Errors, which had been foiſted into the ſeveral Books thereof, by the Tricks and Cheats of ſucceeding Ages, long after the Deaths of the Apoſtles. They maintain'd it was *full of Corruptions and Falſifications*. And therefore *Fauſtus* boaſts (*y*) that the *Manichean Faith alone* ſecur'd the Profeſſors thereof from all danger of Hereſy, by inſtructing them *not to believe every thing which was written in the Name of our Saviour, but to try whether what they Read to have been taught by him, was really true, ſound and uncorrupted. For* (as he goes on) *there are many Tares mingled with the Wheat, which an Enemy, during the times of Night and Darkneſs, has Sown and Scattered in almoſt all the Scriptures, for the infecting and poiſoning the good ſeed.* And again, (*z*) he asks the Catholicks, *What reaſon they had to think it ſtrange, if he, ſelecting thoſe Paſſages out of the New Teſtament, that were moſt pure, and conduc'd to his Salvation, ſhould fling away all the reſt, which had been fraudulently convey'd into it by their Predeceſſors and ſullied the Native Beauty and Majeſty of the Truth?* This was their conſtant Practice; when they were preſs'd with any Texts, which they could not reconcile to

(*y*) *St. Auguſt. againſt Fauſtus l.* 18. *c.* 3.

(*z*) *L.* 32. *c.* 1.

their fond Opinions, they without more ado ſlighted their Authority, affirming the Teſtimonies produc'd againſt them, were forg'd and no part of the Doctrin deliver'd by our Bleſſed Lord and his Apoſtles. And therefore St. *Auguſtine* (*a*) accuſes them, as receiving the Scriptures only for faſhion's ſake, while by aſſerting them to be *falſified and corrupted*, they perfectly detracted from their Authority; that is, if I underſtand him aright, they pretended, upon occaſion to have a deference for the *New Teſtament*, whereas really they had none. For they charg'd it with Corruption, and acknowledg'd nothing as an Article of Faith, purely becauſe contain'd in the Books, and upon the warrant, thereof, but becauſe they judg'd it true upon other accounts, and for this Reaſon were willing to own that it (*b*) *might poſſibly* have been deliver'd by Chriſt or his Diſciples.

(*a*) *L.* 13. *c.* 5. *l.* 22. *c.* 15. *l.* 32. *c.* 19.

(*b*) *L.* 33. *c.* 3.

And therefore I readily joyn with our Author, and acknowledgd that the *Manichees* really rejected the whole *New Teſtament*; not only becauſe there are ſeveral paſſages of *Fauſtus*, which plainly intimate as much, but alſo becauſe St. *Auguſtine* himſelf ſeems clearly to have underſtood them in that Senſe. For thus we learn from him, (*c*) that theſe Hereticks affirm'd their Paraclet *Manicheus* had taught them, that *the Scriptures* (even (*d*) the Scriptures of the *New Teſtament*, receiv'd for Canonical by the Catholicks) *were not the Works of the Apoſtles, but wrote by others in their Names.* And we Read again how the ſame worthy Teacher had inform'd them, (*e*) that *the Evangelical Writings, part of which they refus'd to admit were not the Apoſtles.* And accordingly we ſhall obſerve by and

(*c*) *L.* 32. *c.* 16.

(*d*) *See the beginning of that Chapter.*

(*e*) *L.* 32. *c.* 18. *towards the end.*

and by, that this Father was ſo ſenſible, how far theſe miſerable Hereticks had been ſeduc'd in this matter, that he thought himſelf concern'd directly to anſwer this Objection, and prove againſt his Adverſary *Fauſtus*, that, whatever he and his Party pretended, the Goſpels and Epiſtles, admitted by the Catholick Church, were Genuine and Authentick.

That therefore we may allow our Author, and his Objection againſt the Canon of the *New Teſtament*, drawn from the *Manicheans*, all the fair play that can be deſir'd, I ſhall ſtate the full Senſe thereof in the two following Propoſitions. XV.

(1.) The Books of the *New Teſtament* were not wrote by the Apoſtles or Apoſtolical Men, (*f*) but drawn up ſeveral years after them out of reports, Traditions, and Hiſtorical Memoirs.

(*f*) *See S. Aug. againſt Fauſtus l.* 33. *c.* 3.

(2.) Whoever they were that drew them up, they falſified and corrupted the pure Doctrins of Chriſtianity, by inſerting ſeveral Errors and contradictions among the Truth. And therefore the *Manichees* admitted the Books juſt ſo far and in ſuch particulars as they judg'd them true, and rejected the reſt as of no value.

This is the utmoſt force, which can be put into the Objection; and we'll now enquire in the next place, what St. *Auguſtine* return'd by way of Anſwer.

Firſt, then, to prove that the Writings of the *New Teſtament* were Genuine, and that the Evangeliſts and Apoſtles were the real Authors

of thoſe Pieces, which bear their Names, he thus reaſons with *Fauſtus* and his Followers.

(g) *L.* 33. *c.* 6. "(g) O unhappy and wretched Enemies "of your own Souls! Tell me, I pray, what "Books can ever be judg'd Authentick, if the "Evangelical, if the Apoſtolical Writings "don't deſerve to be ſo eſteem'd? How can "we be ever certain of the Author of any "Treatiſe in the World, if thoſe Writings, "which the Church, planted by the Apoſtles "in all Nations, affirms and maintains to be "theirs, may yet be rejected as falſe and Sup-"poſititious; and inſtead thereof, others be re-"ceiv'd as really Apoſtolical, which were "firſt brought to light by Hereticks, whoſe "very Maſters, from whom they take their "donominations, did not live till long after the "Apoſtles, and yet pretend to have known "better then the Univerſal Church, what Writ-"ings thoſe firſt Preachers of our Religion, left "behind them? Conſider the caſe of ſeveral "Pieces Publiſh'd about Secular and Human "Learning. There are many of this ſort, "which appear under great Names, that are "yet juſtly rejected by the Judicious, becauſe "they are by no means conſiſtent with the Stile "and Genius of them, whoſe Names they "aſſume; or have never, by ſuch as were cap-"able of knowing, been declar'd and acknow-"ledg'd to be the Genuine Works of thoſe to "whom they are aſcrib'd by the Ignorant. Do "not Phyſicians, for Examples ſake, reject the "Authority of divers Treatiſes, which fly a-"broad under the Name of *Hippocrates?* And "though there may perhaps be *ſome* reſemblance

"in

"in Thought and Expreſſion, yet notwith-
"ſtanding that, they condemn them as Spuri-
"ous, becauſe they fall ſhort of the real Perfor-
"mances of that great Man, and have no ſuffici-
"ent Evidence to prove their being Genuine.
"And for thoſe, which are indeed his Works,
"Whence is it that the Learned conclude they
"belong to him, whence is it that thoſe, who
"ſhould queſtion the ſame, would be laugh'd
"at, not refuted, but only becauſe a conſtant
"Tradition, from his Age down to the preſent
"days, has atteſted them? And he that ſhould
"pretend to doubt of a matter, eſtabliſh'd by
"the continued ſucceſſion of ſo long a time,
"would be accounted mad or diſtracted.
"Whence do Men learn that the Books of
"*Plato*, *Ariſtotle*, *Cicero*, *Varro* and other Au-
"thors, are indeed of their compoſing, but be-
"cauſe they are ſo inform'd by the Teſtimonies
"of ſeveral Ages, ſucceeding and following one
"another? Many too have Wrote largely
"concerning Eccleſiaſtical Affairs, not indeed
"with Canonical Authority, but with a deſire
"of profiting others or themſelves. How
"know we to whom any of theſe Diſcourſes is
"to be aſſign'd, but only from hence that their
"reſpective Authors acquainted others with
"what they Wrote at the time when they firſt
"Publiſh'd the ſame, from whom it has been
"convey'd by ſeveral hands ſucceſſively to the
"preſent time, ſo that, without any doubting
"or heſitation we can, when examin'd con-
"cerning any particular Diſcourſe, tell pre-
"ſently what to anſwer? But why do I inſiſt
"upon things long ſince paſt? Conſider what
"is now before us. Behold here the Treatiſe

" of *Fauſtus*; behold my Anſwer. If any
" ſhould in future times enquire, which way
" they might be aſſur'd, that I Wrote the one,
" and *Fauſtus* the other, how could they be in-
" form'd of the Truth, but only by appealing
" to the Tradition, which had, from thoſe who
" were our contemporaries and knew what we
" did, been tranſmitted to Poſterity? Since
" then the caſe is plain and evident, and e-
" ſteem'd ſo by all the World, in other Writ-
" ings, why ſhould it not be ſo in thoſe of the
" Apoſtles? Who is there ſo blinded with
" Madneſs, and Poſſeſs'd with the Malice of de-
" ceiving and lying Devils, as to affirm that the
" Church has not the ſame ſecurity for the
" Books, which ſhe receives? Can we imagine,
" that ſo many Witneſſes of the greateſt Faith-
" fulneſs and Integrity, that ſuch an unanimous
" Number of Brethren in all Places, agreeing
" in the ſame aſſertions, ſhould conſpire to im-
" poſe upon the World with falſe Pieces? Or
" that the Churches, which derive their ſucceſ-
" ſion in a continued line from the Apoſtles,
" ſhould not have their Books likewiſe convey'd
" to them, with as certain and ſteady a Tradi-
" tion, as is that upon which we admit Eccleſia-
" ſtical or Prophane Writings? And again in
another Place, " You that raiſe ſo many ſcruples
" about the Authority of our Books, How will
(*b*) *L.* 32. *c.* 21. " you juſtify the Epiſtle of *Manicheus* (*b*) and
" prove that it was Wrote by him? If any
" one ſhould contradict you in this matter, and
" boldly affirm that it was none of his, but a
" down right Forgery, what would you reply?
" Would you not be ready to laugh at the con-
" fident Talker, would you not tell him, that

" it

" it was Impudence and Dotage to move any " doubts concerning that, for which you had " the ſucceſſive Teſtimony of ſo many Perſons " from the days of your Paraclet? And have " not we the ſame too, nay one of a much " larger extent, for the Books of the Apoſtles? " If it would be Ridiculous and Impertinent, " to queſtion whether the Pieces of your *Ma-* " *nicheus* be Genuine, is it not much more ſo, " to doubt of the Apoſtolical Writings? And " are not you to be derided, or rather to be " pitied, who raiſe ſo many difficulties about " them, which are Eſtabliſh'd upon the Au- " thority of ſo large and diffuſive a Teſtimony, " through the ſeveral Ages and places of the " Church, from the days of their firſt Au- " thors?

Thus does the learned Father anſwer the firſt Objection, by producing thoſe grounds and reaſons, upon which the Catholicks embrac'd the Books of the New Teſtament as Authentick and Genuine.

We proceed now to the ſecond Objection, which was, that whoever the Men were, which drew up the Books of the New Teſtament, they falſified and corrupted the pure Doctrins of Chriſtianity, by inſerting ſeveral Errors and Contradictions among the Truth. Now it having been already prov'd, that theſe were *really* the Writings of the Apoſtles and Apoſtolick Men, we have nothing elſe to do but repreſent the Reaſons St. *Auguſtine* alledges to ſhow, that they neither were nor could be Corrupted, nor yet had any Errors or Contradictions inſerted in them.

That

That they were not falſified or corrupted, he thus argues, " (*i*) You pretend to prove that " *Manicheus* is the Paraclet or Comforter from " ſome Paſſages in our Books, which yet you " ſay have been corrupted. What would you " reply, if we ſhould retort the charge upon " you, and affirm that you had falſifiyd them in " thoſe Particulars which concern your Para- " clet? I ſuppoſe, you'd tell us that we ac- " cus'd you of a thing impoſſible, becauſe the " Books were in the hands of all Chriſtians be- " fore, and you might eaſily be convict of falſe " dealing by numerous and more ancient Copies. " We ſay the ſame too, and urge that thoſe " Arguments which are alledg'd, to ſhow you " are Innocent in this matter, prove alſo that " no Body elſe did or could corrupt them. " For whoever ſhould firſt ſet about ſuch a " thing, would quickly be confuted, and the " Impoſture be diſcover'd, by conſulting other " Copies, of which there is a great multitude, " diſpers'd over all Countries and in all Lan- " guages: ſo that ſuch an attempt would be " equally ſilly and impoſſible.

(*i*) *L.* 32. *c.* 16.

And that there might be no Cavil, upon the account of little miſtakes to be obſerv'd in ſome Copies, the Father adds — " For even in " our days ſome Errors of the Tranſcribers " are uſually corrected, either by the aſſiſtance " of more ancient Books or other Languages.

To this he had ſpoken more fully before, — (*k*) " If there happen any diſpute concerning " the exactneſs of Copies, as to the various " Readings, which are but few in number and " ſufficiently known to the Learned, we have " recourſe to the Books of thoſe Countries " from

(*k*) *L.* 11. *c.* 2.

" from whence we receiv'd our Copies and Re-
" ligion together, and are willing they ſhould
" determine the Controverſy. Or if there
" ſtill appear any difference, the greater num-
" ber of Copies ought to be preferr'd before
" the leſs, thoſe which are moſt Ancient to
" thoſe of a later date, and the Original Lan-
" guages to all others. Thus do they pro-
" ceed, who, when they meet with any difficul-
" ties in the Holy Scriptures, ſearch and ex-
" amine things with a deſire to be inſtructed,
" not merely to cavil and diſpute.

As to the *Contradictions* and *Errors*, which *Fauſtus* pretended are to be found in the *New Teſtament*, St. *Auguſtine* goes through all the Particulars of the Charge as they are urg'd by his Adverſary. But I ſuppoſe, it will not be expected that I ſhould do ſo too, that is none of my buſineſs. The Charge contained in the Paſſages, produc'd from *Fauſtus*, by our Author, is conceiv'd in *general terms*, and it will be ſufficient for me, if thereto I return the Summe of the Father's *General Anſwer*, which is this, —— that, " Since the Scriptures are Books of ſo
" great Authority (that is, clearly prov'd to
have been Wrote (*l*) by the Followers of our
Lord, and by no means wilfully Falſified or
Corrupted) " we ought to Read them out of
" a Principle of Piety, not Contention; we
" ought to uſe the greateſt Induſtry and Ap-
" plication in the ſtudy of them, and rather
" accuſe our own Dulneſs, Negligence, or want
" of Apprehenſion, then blame thoſe Excellent
" and Divine Writings, when at any time we
" can't underſtand or reconcile them.

(*l*) *L.* 11. *c.* 6. *l.* 32. *c.* 16. *l.* 33. *c.* 7.

There

There remains but one Particular more to be examin'd at preſent, and that is urg'd above in the Words of the Seventh Objection, where we are told that the *Manicheans*, not only deny'd the Genuineneſs of the whole *New Teſtament*, but *alſo ſhew'd other Scriptures*.

It is not eaſy to determine what Books are here *more eſpecially* deſign'd by this Expreſſion. Perhaps our Author may intend thereby, the various Treatiſes Publiſh'd (*m*) by *Manicheus*, or the four Pieces, long before Written by (*n*) *Scythianus*, who liv'd about the time of our Saviour, and was indeed the firſt Author of moſt of the Extravagant Opinions, afterwards Publickly aſſerted and maintain'd by the *Manichees*.

(*m*) *Epiphan. Hereſ* 66. *Sect.* 13.
(*n*) *Ib. S.* 2.

But becauſe there is place for doubting, I think it fair and reaſonable to take this Paſſage in ſuch a Senſe, *as ſeems to me* moſt ſerviceable to the deſign our Author is here carrying on, and ſhall therefore ſuppoſe he eſpecially intended ſome Books, that were ſpread abroad in the Apoſtles Names, diſtinct from thoſe acknowledg'd by Catholicks, which are all comprehended in the *New Teſtament*.

That the *Manichees* had ſuch Pieces is ſufficiently evident from St. *Auguſtine*, who tells us (*o*) that they Read Apocryphal Books, drawn up by certain Forgers of Tales, under the Names of the Apoſtles. And again, (*p*) that they receiv'd ſuch Scriptures for ſincere and Genuine, as were rejected by the Eccleſiaſtical Canon. Such Scriptures therefore theſe Hereticks certainly had, different from thoſe of the Catholick Church; and by the aſſiſtance of them, they endeavour'd to ſupport thoſe Erroneous

(*o*) *L.* 22. *againſt Fauſtus c.* 79.
(*p*) *Ibid. See alſo l.* 13. *c.* 5.--- *l.* 33. *c.* 6. *Treatiſe againſt Adimantus c.* 17. -- *of Hereſies. Num.* 46.

roneous and falſe Doctrins, which they embrac'd.

But before I proceed any farther, I think my ſelf here oblig'd to take notice, that our Author (q) in his *Catalogue*, mentions an *Epiſtle of Chriſt to Peter and Paul*, and vouches for it the Twenty Eighth Book of St. *Auguſtine* againſt *Fauſtus*, Chapter the Thirteenth: which may perhaps make the unwary Reader believe, that ſuch an Epiſtle is there ſet down, as part of the Scripture receiv'd by, and peculiar to, the *Manichees*. (q) P. 20.

But I muſt tell him, (1.) That there are but *five* Chapters in all the *Twenty Eighth* Book, and therefore the citing the *Thirteenth* is a miſtake. (2.) In the *Fourth* Chapter, where the Father ſpeaks of an Epiſtle of our Saviour, there is not one word to intimate that it was Wrote, or pretended to be Wrote, to the two Apoſtles above mention'd. (3.) Neither indeed could there be. For it would be Evident to any one, who ſhall ſeriouſly conſider the Place, that St. *Auguſtine* is there arguing againſt the *Manichees* for pretending they would rather believe the Teſtimony of Chriſt concerning himſelf then any of his Apoſtles. To which, the Father replies, that "Our Saviour Wrote "nothing, and therefore, if we'll believe any "Relations concerning him at all, we muſt be"lieve thoſe which were drawn up by his Diſ"ciples; that if any Epiſtle or other Piece "ſhould be now produc'd in his Name, Men "would preſently enquire, How it came to "ly bid all this while, who it was that firſt "brought it to light, whence it was that it had "not been before acknowledg'd, Read, Cele-

"brated

" brated every where in the Church, from the
" days of the Apoſtles? And that therefore
" it would be a prodigious want of conſidera-
" tion to admit that for an Epiſtle of Chriſt,
" which a *Manichee* ſhould perhaps pretend ſo
" to be at this time of day, and not aſſent to
" thoſe things as done or ſay'd by him which
" are related by St. *Matthew*, &c. Whence it
is apparent, that the *Manichees* had not *actually* produc'd any Writings in the Name of our Saviour at that time; and if they had, the ſame Argument would have overthrown them, which St. *Auguſtine* urges againſt thoſe Pieces which were ſhelter'd under the Titles of the Apoſtles. For certainly, as he tells *Fauſtus*, If there Writings had been Genuine, if they had taught nothing but what was agreeable to the Truth,

(r) *l.* 22. *c.* 79. " (*r*) They would have been own'd and ac-
" knowledg'd by thoſe Holy and Learned Men,
" who liv'd in the days of their pretended Au-
" thors, and been by them and ſucceeding Ages
" receiv'd among the Books, which were ac-
" counted Canonical, and ſubmitted to as an in-
" fallible Rule of Faith and Manners. To this effect he preſſes theſe Hereticks in one place;

(s) *l.* 28. *c.* 2. and in (*s*) another he thus beſpeaks them, —— *You produce a Book perhaps, which bears the Name of one of the Apoſtles, who were really choſen by our Lord, where you Read that Chriſt was not born of a Virgin. It is undoubted that either your Goſpel or ours muſt be falſe, and which do you think in your Conſciences it is moſt reaſonable to believe?* Shall not I aſſent to a Book, *which the Church, that was begun by Chriſt, and carried on every where by his Apoſtles in a certain order of Succeſſion to theſe days, has receiv'd and preſerv'd from the beginning? Or*

Or ſhall I give credit *to a Piece produc'd by you, which the ſame Church rejects as utterly unknown to her, and was at firſt brought to the Publick view, (t) by Men ſo few in number*, if compar'd with the whole Body of Chriſtians, and of *ſo little veracity, as that they are not aſham'd to charge our great Maſter himſelf with falſhood and deceiving?*

(t) *l.* 13. *c.* 5.

And thus I have gone through all the Parts of the Argument againſt the *Canon* of the *New Teſtament*, drawn from the Opinions and Practices of the *Manichees*, and furniſh'd the Reader with the Anſwers, which St. *Auguſtine* gives to every Branch thereof. This our Author, if he had ſo pleas'd, might have done before me; for the Replies are found in the very ſame Treatiſe from which he fetch'd his Objections. And I ſhall appeal to himſelf whether this be an ingenuous and fair way of proceeding, to revive an old weather-beaten Cavil, and furbiſh it up with a great deal of Pomp and Oſtentation, as if it was able to run down a whole Army of oppoſers, when yet he neither was nor could be Ignorant, how all the force of it had been ſhatter'd and broken in pieces above a Thouſand years before he was born.

But perhaps our Author will tell me, as he does Mr. *Blackhall* in the caſe of the *Eikon Baſilike*, that he is of another Opinion, that he knew of theſe Anſwers indeed well enough before, but paſſed them over in ſilence, becauſe he judged them inſufficient. If he'll venture his Reputation on ſuch a Reply, I cannot help it; though I would adviſe him as a friend, to offer any thing elſe rather for his Juſtification. For the World will not 'twice be impoſed upon by the ſame.

ſame trick; and ſince, for inſtance, after all his Labour and ſhuffling, the Teſtimonies of Mrs. *Gauden* and Doctor *Walker will not be reconciled*, which he had pretended might be done with a wet Finger, Men will be ſo ſurly and ill natur'd, as to think, that it is ſomething elſe, and not the weakneſs of an Argument, or Anſwer, that makes him ſay nothing to it.

But to let that paſs at preſent, I proceed to remark how upon this occaſion we are told (*p.* 63.) that the *Adverſaries* of the *Manicheans had power enough to be counted Orthodox*. And was there indeed no difference, good Sir, between the two Parties, but that? Do you indeed believe the *Manichean* Doctrin was true? Do you believe the Exiſtence of two Supreme Gods, a Good one and a Bad? Do you believe the Tranſmigration of Souls, and the other Whimſies which were aſſerted by thoſe Brainſick Hereticks? If you do, ſpeak out, and then *we ſhall know* (as you expreſs it *p.* 49.) *where to have you, and how to deal with you.* If you do not, is not this an excellent and very commendable way of proceeding, to endeavour to draw your Readers to believe that of which you believe nothing your ſelf; and to perſwade them that it was nothing but *Power*, which diſtinguiſh'd the *Catholicks* from the *Manicheans*, and made them be accounted *Orthodox*. This is the Eternal Clamour of this kind of Men. They'll have it to be only Power and Intereſt, which keeps us in the acknowledgement of the Catholick Doctrin, and if it was not for that, they ſay we would quickly forſake it. But, pray, Sir, (not to inſiſt now upon the fury and violence of the *Arians*) What Power had the Catholicks in the firſt 300 years?

years? What force had they then to compel Men to embrace their Doctrin, when they lay under the ſharpeſt Perſecutions, and were conſtantly expos'd to the Fire, to the Sword, and to other ſevere Tortures, themſelves? And yet even then, they ſtood up ſtoutly for the Truth, and inflicted Eccleſiaſtical Cenſures on thoſe Hereticks who corrupted the Faith, and met together in Councils, to condemn their Erroneous Opinions, even at the Peril of their Lives. This they did in the caſe of *Paulus Samoſatenus*, Biſhop of *Antioch*. They held two Councils there upon his account; the Biſhops when they heard his Opinion, that he aſſerted Jeſus Chriſt to be no more then a meer Man, came together from ſeveral parts, as againſt a Spoiler and Deſtroyer of our Lords Flock (ſo *Euſebius* (*a*) tells us) and having firſt condemn'd his Doctrin, they afterwards depos'd him and ſubſtituted another in his Place. Though he kept Poſſeſſion of the Epiſcopal Chair and Houſe for three years after the Sentence (as the Learned inform us) by the Aſſiſtance of *Zenobia* Queen of *Palmyra*. And here I hope (what our Author in his fleering way calls) Orthodoxy and Power were not on the ſame ſide. Nevertheleſs the Fathers did not flinch for the matter, but though *Zenobia* aſſerted the cauſe of *Paulus*, yet they refus'd to Communicate with him as being a Convict Heretick, after they had ſufficiently prov'd him ſo to be.

(*a*) *Eccl. Hiſt. l. 7. c. 27.*

VIII. We are told (*p.* 64.) *that the Ebionites or Nazarens* (*who were the eldeſt Chriſtians*) *had a different Copy of St. Matthews Goſpel*; *that the Marcionites had a very different one of St.* XVI.

Luke's; that St. John's Goſpel was attributed to Cerinthus, and all the Epiſtles of St. Paul deny'd by ſome, and a different Copy of them ſhown by others.

Our Author has here jumbled a great many Hereticks together, and one Anſwer might ſerve them all, by referring to what has been already ſay'd by way of reply to the Fourth Objection (*p.* 35, *&c.* But I ſhall diſtinguiſh, and give a different account of them ſeverally, that ſo we may underſtand how far each of them proceeded and with what they are juſtly chargeable, and ſo give every one a Separate Anſwer. He tells us, that *the Ebionites or Nazarens were the oldeſt Chriſtians.* We'll lay the Name of *Ebionites* aſide for a while, and ſhall grant what he ſays concerning the *Nazarens*; for *that* indeed was the common Appellation given by the Jews at firſt to *all Chriſtians.* For thus we find *Tertullus* accuſing St. *Paul* (*Acts* 24. 5.) as a Ring-leader of the *Sect of the Nazarens.* But afterwards this Title was appropriated to a particular Faction. Before the Deſtruction of *Jeruſalem*, (as (*b*) *Euſebius* and (*c*) *Epiphanius* tell us,) all the Chriſtians, who were there, being admoniſh'd from above, retir'd to *Pella*, a City beyond *Jordan*, and by that means eſcap'd thoſe horrible Plagues, which fell upon the reſt of their Country-men. After the departure of the *Roman* Army, the greateſt part return'd to *Jeruſalem*, as we are inform'd by (*d*) *Euſebius*, and there continued under the Government of the Biſhops of that Church; the Succeſſion of whom we have ſet down by (*e*) *Epiphanius*, from St. *James* the Apoſtle to his own time. Thoſe Chriſtians, which ſtay'd behind at *Pella*, were ever

(*b*) *Eccl. Hiſt. l.* 3. *c.* 5.
(*c*) *Hereſ.* 29. *Sect.* 7.
(*d*) *l.* 3. *c.* 11.
(*e*) *Her.* 66. *n.* 20.

ever after, (*f*) as the ſame Author informs us, call'd *Nazarens*, and differ'd from the Catholicks in this, that they thought themſelves ſtill oblig'd to Circumciſion and all the Rites and Ceremonies of the Moſaical Law. Out (*g*) of them ſprang the *Ebionites*, who, as we learn from (*b*) *Euſebius*, were of two ſorts; One of them affirm'd that our Saviour was really the Son of *Joſeph*, born of him and *Mary*, as other Men us'd to be of their Parents. The other aſſerted his Miraculous Incarnation from a Virgin, and yet maintain'd, that he was a meer Man, abſolutely denying his Divinity. We ſee then, how our Author equivocated when he told * us *the Nazarens were the oldeſt Chriſtians*. Thoſe indeed whom *Tertullus*, in the *Acts*, call'd by that Name, were ſo; but not thoſe, among whom the *Ebionites* ſprung up, and who joyn'd with one or other part of this Sect, and therefore, as *Euſebius*, in the place now quoted, tells us, were all call'd promiſcuouſly by that Name;

(*f*) *Her.* 29. *n.* 7.

(*g*) *Epiph. Her.* 30. *n.* 1, 2.

(*b*) *l.* 3. *c.* 27.

* Of the *Nazarens* mention'd in the *Acts*, St. *Paul* was ſay'd to be a Ring-leader. But theſe *Nazarens*, of which we are here ſpeaking, deteſted him as an Apoſtate.

though the more Moderate ſort were † (*i*) alſo often call'd only *Nazarens*. *Theſe* ſtill adhering to the *Jewiſh* Law, as we above obſerv'd, *rejected all the Epiſtles of St. Paul*, calling him an *Apoſtate and Deſerter*, and receiv'd only the *Goſpel according to the Hebrews*, ſlighting all the reſt, as *Euſebius* there further relates. The Goſpel according to the *Hebrews* was, as we may learn from (*k*) *Epiphanius* and (*l*) St. *Jerome*, the Goſpel, of St. *Matthew* in Hebrew, but yet with ſeveral interpolations and additions of

(*i*) *Compare Euſeb. l.* 3. *c.* 27. *with Epiphan. Hereſ.* 29. *n.* 7.

(*k*) *Hereſ.* 29. *n.* 9.

(*l*) *Againſt the Pelagians l.* 3. *in the beginning.*

† Both ſorts of *Ebionites*, as *Euſebius* tells us (*l.* 3. *c.* 27.) adhered to the Inſtitutions of the Law of *Moſes*, and ſo ſays *Epiphanius* (*Hereſ.* 29. *n.* 7.) did the *Nazarens*, among whom the ſame Author acknowledges (*Hereſ.* 30. *n.* 1, 2.) the *Ebionites* ſprang up and took from them, ſome of their Opinions. 'Tis plain therefore that the *Nazarens* (who agreed with them in many of their Doctrins) were *one ſort* of the *Ebionites*, ſince elſe we cannot make two. *Epiphanius* indeed ſeems to ſay (*Hereſ.* 29. *n.* 7.) that the *Nazarens* receiv'd *all the New* as well as the *Old Teſtament*. But he owns there, that he had not a perfect account of their Tenents, and 'tis Evident he was miſtaken in this particular. For ſince he affirms in the ſame place, that they ſtrictly adher'd to the Moſaical Law, *they muſt reject* the Epiſtles of St. *Paul*, which declar'd againſt the Obligation thereof. And that there were two ſorts of *Ebionites*, which agreed in this matter, *Origen* (*l.* 5. againſt *Celſus p.* 274.) affirms, as well as *Euſebius*; and alſo tells us before (*l.* 2. *p.* 56.) that the *Jews* call'd all thoſe, who cleaving ſtill to their Rites and Ceremonies, own'd *Jeſus* for their Meſſiah, *Ebionites*. And therefore ſince the *Nazarens* did ſo, they were undoubtedly *ſometimes* call'd by *that* Name, as well as other times by that of *Nazarens*.

their

their own, * though without making any alterations in what they found in the Authentick Copies before. The other Party, more properly call'd *Ebionites*, corrupted the Goſpel of St. *Matthew* in ſeveral Particulars, took away the Genealogy of our Saviour, and alter'd it in other Paſſages, as (*m*) *Epiphanius* teaches us. Beſides, they only admitted the Books of *Moſes* and *Joſhua* of the *Old Teſtament*, rejecting all the Prophets, deriding and curſing *David* and *Solomon*, *Elijah*, *Eliſha*, *Eſay*, *Jeremy* and the reſt, wherein they were perfectly diſtinguiſh'd from the *Nazarens*, who own'd and eſteem'd them all. However both Parties, as we have ſeen, agreed in this, that they rejected all St. *Paul*'s Epiſtles, deſpis'd all the other Goſpels, and receiv'd only that of St. *Matthew*, which they had more or leſs alter'd with their interpolations.

(*m*) *Hereſ.* 30. *n.* 13.

And now are not theſe excellent Witneſſes for our Author againſt the eſtabliſh'd Canon? Do not they effectually prove, that the Epiſtles, we have under St. *Paul*'s Name, are falſly aſcrib'd to him, who (as we above obſerv'd) inveigh'd againſt St. *Paul* himſelf, as a Deſerter of the Law, as a Cheat and Impoſtor; and in contempt, as *Epiphanius* farther remarks, us'd

* *Epiphanius* in the Place juſt before cited tells us that they had the Goſpel, according to St. *Matthew*, *complete and entire*; therefore it was neither *mutilated nor corrupted*. And St. *Jerome* in divers places mentions *ſeveral Hiſtorical Paſſages* that are not in our Goſpel; thence it appears *they made additions*.

to call him, *the Man of Tarſus*, and would needs have him, though born a *Jew*, to be a Gentile Proſelyte. They rejected not the Epiſtles, but becauſe they rejected the Apoſtle himſelf and his Doctrine. When our Author tells the World he does ſo too, I may think my ſelf oblig'd to defend our Religion againſt him, and theſe Judaizers, whom we are now conſidering.

At preſent, my buſineſs is only to aſſert that our Canon is Genuine, and the Books, which we receive, the true Writings of thoſe to whom they are aſcrib'd. This the *Ebionites* deny'd not, but endeavour'd to run down *the Writers themſelves*, and ſince they had ſo little Chriſtianity as to attempt that, I think, I may ſafely ſay, there can be no difficulty in determining whether the Copies of St. *Matthew*, which they kept, or that which was preſerv'd by *the whole Catholick Church* beſides, ought to be look'd upon as Authentick.

We muſt diſtinguiſh here between the Copy of the *Nazarens*, and of the *Ebionites* ſtrictly ſo call'd. The latter had corrupted and alter'd and interpolated the Goſpel according to St. *Matthew*, and therefore their Copy was juſtly ſtil'd Spurious. But the Goſpel according to the *Hebrews*, which the *Nazarens* embrac'd, contain'd no alterations (as was above obſerv'd) of what St. *Matthew* Wrote, but only the addition of ſome Hiſtorical Paſſages that had been gather'd from Oral Information or Tradition, and were added in their proper Places, to preſerve them and make the ſtory more full and compleat. Several of theſe might probably be true, and therefore, when not pretended

tended to be Wrote by St. *Matthew*, ought not to be call'd Spurious or a Forgery. Canonical indeed they were not, becauſe not the Work of the Apoſtle, as appears from *all the Copies* of the Catholicks; but they might deſerve the Name of *Eccleſiaſtical Hiſtory*, and under that notion be quoted (with Caution) as well as any other Writing of that Nature.

It follows, *the Marcionites had a very different Copy of St. Luke.* No doubt of it. He might have added too, that theſe were the Men, (*n*) *who ſhow'd a different Copy* of moſt *of St. Paul's Epiſtles*, that is, of ſuch as they allow'd; † (*o*) for they rejected thoſe to *Timothy* and *Titus*. And there was good Reaſon for what they did. Since they held that there were two Gods, one of the *Old Teſtament* and another of the *New*; that the former made the World, and was the cauſe of all Wars and Contentions; that *Jeſus Chriſt* was the Son of the other, and ſent by his Father to overthrow and deſtroy all the Works of the *Old-Teſtament-God*; with more ſuch ſtuff, as we may Read in (*p*) *Irenæus*, (*q*) *Tertullian* and (*r*) *Epiphanius*. Now what ſhould XVII.

(*n*) *Iren. l.* 1. *c.* 29. *Epiphan. Here.* 42. *n.* 9.

(*o*) *Ib. and Tertull. against Marcion l.* 5. *c.* 21.

(*p*) *l.* 1. *c.* 29.

(*q*) *Against Marcion.*

(*r*) *Hereſ.* 42.

† *Epiphanius* alſo tells us that *Marcion* rejected the Epiſtle to the *Hebrews*; but he ought not to be charg'd with that as a Crime, becauſe it was not *then generally admitted* by all the *Catholicks*, and therefore *Tertullian* remarks only that he did not receive the two Epiſtles to *Timothy* and that to *Titus*. What Opinion this Heretick had of the other three Goſpels, and of the Canonical Epiſtles, does not belong to my preſent buſineſs, which is only to follow my Author, whether he leads me.

theſe Men do with our Goſpels and Epiſtles, at leaſt till they had chang'd and alter'd them? Since there is nothing in them, which Eſtabliſhes, but many Paſſages which overthrow their fond and lewd Opinions. *Ireneus* and *Tertullian* therefore proceeded rationally in appealing to all the Churches in the World againſt them. *The former* urges that the Diſciples of our Lord taught no ſuch Doctrines, (*s*) either in the Churches, which they founded, or (*t*) yet in thoſe Writings, which they left behind them, and (*u*) which were *preſerv'd entire in all the World*, by the whole Body of Chriſtians. The *latter* preſſes them to conſult (*x*) the *Apoſtolick Churches* and thoſe that held Communion with them, and then tell him, in which of them, *thoſe Hereſies* that *Marcion* maintain'd, or *thoſe Scriptures*, that he had alter'd and corrupted, were embrac'd. The contrary to all this was evident. The Catholicks Copies were all the ſame, as to the Books the Heretick rejected, as well as to the Places he had corrupted; the Catholick Doctrins were all the ſame, and none agreed with *Marcion*, and therefore theſe Fathers concluded, as juſtly they might (eſpecially being no farther remov'd from the Apoſtles themſelves, then the Second Century) that the Cheat and Impoſture lay on the ſide of *Marcion* and his Followers.

(*s*) *l.* 3. *c.* 4.
(*t*) *l.* 3. *c.* 5, 6.
(*u*) *l.* 4. *c.* 63.
(*x*) *l.* 4. *againſt Marcion c.* 4, 5. *Of Preſcript. c.* 32, 33, 36. *See this proſecuted more at large hereafter, Sect.* XXXIV.

XVIII. Our Author proceeds, *St. Johns Goſpel was attributed to Cerinthus.* This we confeſs is very true, and it was done, as we find in (*y*) *Epiphanius* by ſome, who upon that account were call'd *Alogi*. They rejected the *Logos* or *Word*, and would not allow what St. *John* Writes in the

(*y*) *Hereſ.* 51. *n.* 3.

the beginning of his Goſpel to be true concerning our Saviour. And becauſe they had not the face openly to appear againſt what was taught by an Apoſtle, they bring ſeveral Objections to ſhow that it was none of his (which *Epiphanius* anſwers at large) and after all, would have it fix'd on the Heretick *Cerinthus*. But they were very abſurd in ſo doing, as the ſame Father obſerves in the following Section ? (z) For how could thoſe things be Wrote by *Cerinthus*, which do in direct terms contradict his Doctrine ? He aſſerted Jeſus Chriſt to be a *mere Man*, whereas the Author of this Goſpel *aſſerts him to be the Word, which was from Eternity, which came down from Heaven, and was made fleſh for* our ſakes. *Cerinthus* therefore was not, could not be the Author, unleſs we'll ſuppoſe, that he forg'd a Goſpel under the Name of an Apoſtle, on purpoſe to overthrow what himſelf taught and maintain'd every where. We ſee then that St. *John*'s Title, notwithſtanding what has been ſay'd, remains firm and unſhaken ; and it will be further ſtrengthned, if we conſider that *Ireneus* (*l.* 3. *c.* 11. (*a*)) makes it his buſineſs to prove that the beginning of this Goſpel was Wrote expreſly by the Apoſtle to *oppoſe* the Hereſies and Errors of *Cerinthus*.

(z) *Ib. n.* 4.

(*a*) p. 257.

IX. Our Author further urges (*p.* 53, *&c.*) XIX. *that* (*b*) Euſebius *rejects the Acts, Goſpel, Preaching and Revelation of* Peter *from being Authentick, for no other Reaſon, but becauſe no Ancient or Modern Writer* (*ſays he*) *has quoted proofs out of them. But herein* Euſebius *was miſtaken ; for the contrary appears by the Teſtimonies mark'd in the Catalogue,*

(*b*) *Eccl. Hiſt. l.* 3. *c.* 3.

Catalogue, which any body may compare with the Originals. In (c) *another place he ſays that the Goſpel of* Peter, Thomas, Matthias *and ſuch like, with the Acts of* Andrew, John *and the other Apoſtles are Spurious, becauſe no Eccleſiaſtick Writer, from the time of the Apoſtles down to his own, has vouchſaf'd to quote them; which is abſolutely falſe of ſome, as we have already ſeen. —— Had* Euſebius *found any of theſe Pieces cited by the precedent Orthodox Writers, he would have own'd them as genuine Productions of the Apoſtles, and admitted them, as we ſay, into the Canon. But having met with no ſuch Citations, he preſently concluded there were none; which made him reject theſe Books. And I ſay (what I have already demonſtrated) that proofs were quoted out of ſome of them long before, ſo that they might ſtill belong to the Canon for all* Euſebius.

(c) l. 3. c. 25.

This is a long-winded Objection, but we ſhall better underſtand what ſtrength there is in it, if it be divided into the three following Propoſitions. (1.) That *Euſebius* rejects the aforeſay'd Books, only becauſe he thought that none of them had been quoted and mention'd by the Ancients; when yet ſome of them really were. (2.) That if he had known, they had been ſo quoted, he would have look'd upon them as Canonical. (3.) It being evident therefore, that they were ſo quoted by the Ancients, they ought, according to *Euſebius* his Principles, to be eſteem'd Canonical. This is the force of the Objection, and to this there are two Anſwers drawn up, which it is pretended we are like to make. But of all People in the World, I ſhall not truſt our Author to give in any

any Anſwers in my Name. If they be good for any thing, he'll certainly leave them behind him. Thus he did in the caſe of *Origen* and St. *Auguſtine*, who had furniſh'd him with very good ones to the Objections of *Celſus* and *Fauſtus*, but he fairly dropt them by the way, and ſo left the Heathen and the Heretick in Poſſeſſion of the Field. And I dare ſay, that if he had not thought he could eaſily overthrow thoſe Anſwers he produces in this place in the Name of his Adverſaries, we ſhould never have heard one word of them. I am reſolv'd therefore, to have nothing to do with his Anſwers, whether good or bad, but ſhall give in ſuch as I will ſtand by, and accordingly ſpeak to the above-mention'd Propoſitions in their order.

The firſt is, that *Euſebius* rejects the forefaid Books only becauſe he thought they were none of them quoted or mention'd by the Ancients, when yet ſome of them really were. To which I anſwer, (1.) That *Euſebius* could not be Ignorant, that ſome of theſe Pieces are quoted by *Clemens of Alexandria* (who mentions them ſeveral times) being very much converſant in the works of that Father, and having expreſly taken notice that (*d*) *one of them was cited by him*; and therefore when he ſays that none of theſe Books are quoted by the Ancients, he muſt be underſtood to mean (not that they are never quoted at all, for that he knew they were, and ſays ſo expreſly concerning the Revelation of St. *Peter* (*Eccleſ. Hiſt. l.* 3. *c.* 25.) but) that they were never quoted by any as Canonical, and this was a ſufficient reaſon, why he ſhould not admit them under that notion.

(*d*) *Eccl. Hiſt. l.* 6. *c.* 14.

Though

Though (2.) this is not the only Reaſon; for he obſerves of ſeveral of them, that (*e*) they contain'd a Doctrine contrary to the Catholick Faith which was planted by the Apoſtles, and therefore ought to be cenſur'd and rejected as the undoubted Contrivances and Forgeries of Hereticks.

(*e*) *l.* 3. *c.* 25.

The Second Propoſition is, That if *Euſebius* had known that any of theſe Pieces had been ever quoted by the Ancients, he would have eſteem'd them Canonical. I anſwer, it is evident from what has been juſt now ſay'd, that *Euſebius* did know it and yet would not receive them into the Canon. The bare quoting a Book, except it be quoted as part of the Rule of Faith, or a Genuine Writing Compos'd or Authoriz'd by the Apoſtles, ſignifies nothing in this caſe, as has been allready prov'd. Nay, I ſhall further add, that if *Euſebius* had known, that *ſome* of the Ancients had really quoted one or more of theſe Pieces as Canonical, *that* alone would not have induc'd him to receive them as ſuch. For this was the very caſe of the Epiſtle of St. *James*, the Second of St. *Peter*, and the reſt of the once controverted Pieces. They were quoted by many, and quoted by many too as Canonical, yet becauſe the whole Church was not then acquainted with the Reaſons, which afterward ſatisfied her to admit theſe Books as parts of the Code of the *New Teſtament*, we ſee that they were lay'd aſide and not advanc'd to that honour by *Euſebius*.

The

The Third Propoſition is, That ſince theſe Acts, Goſpel, Preaching, Revelation of St. *Peter*, and the others, were ſome of them really quoted by the Ancients, they ought, according to the Principles of *Euſebius*, to be receiv'd for Canonical. I anſwer, No; unleſs quoted as Canonical, and prov'd Canonical too, by ſuch Teſtimonies as were ſufficient to ſatisfy the Catholick Church, as appears by the Inſtances of the *Epiſtle* of St. *James*, and the reſt abovemention'd. When *Euſebius* could not meet with ſo much as *one* Primitive Father, who cited theſe Books for Canonical, *that alone* (though he had another reaſon too againſt divers of them, as appears before) was ſufficient warrant for him to reject them. But for the introducing them into the Canon, a conſtant and well atteſted Tradition, by ſuch as were capable of Judging, from the firſt Ages, that they had been prov'd Genuine, upon Authentick Teſtimonies, was requiſite in his Opinion, and therefore our Authors Objection vaniſhes into air and ſignifies juſt nothing.

X. I come now to the laſt Objection, which is founded on a long Paſſage of Mr. *Dodwell*, who (as is inſinuated) reflects more upon the Certainly and Authority of the Canon of the *New Teſtament*, then any thing, which had been before excepted againſt, in our Author. This is uſher'd in, with great Pomp and Ceremony; for we Read (*p.* 69.) that *Mr.* D. *alone, though a Layman, underſtands as much Eccleſiaſtical Hiſtory, as the Divines of all Churches put together.* This is a high flight indeed; methinks it XX.

it had been enough to have made him understand as much as all the *English* Divines, but to bring in the Divines of all other Churches besides, is a little too Extravagant, and more, I am certain, then our Author can possibly know. I shall not in the least detract from the true Character of that worthy Gentleman, who ought to be (and I believe generally is) valued for his great Learning and Piety, and will, I am confident give our Author no thanks for his Complement, or for bringing him in as a Witness in the case now before us. For he is quite of another Opinion, and tells us expressly but a few Pages before that Passage which is produc'd by our Author, that (*f*) *there is no manner of reason to donbt of that Tradition, which has transmitted to us the Canon of the New Testament.* This, I think, is a point blank contradiction to the Natural design and tendency of the Treatise we are now considering, since *that* runs all into confusion, and plainly aims at the perswading Men, that in the Business of the Canon, we have nothing but Darkness and Obscurity.

(*f*) *Sect.* 36. *p.* 62.

Mr. *Dodwell*'s Principal Intention in the long Passage quoted from him, was to show, that we have as good Evidence, that the *Practical Traditions* (as for Instance, Episcopal Government) which obtain'd in the time of *Ireneus*, and were deliver'd *as such*, were really *Apostolical Institutions*, as there is for the Canon of the *New Testament*; because the Books, we now receive for *Canonical or our Rule of Faith*, were not so fix'd and determin'd till the beginning of the Second Century, as to be appeal'd to by the Christian Church under that notion. And they

they were then ſettled upon the Teſtimony of the ſame Perſons (and ſent (*g*) abroad too in- to all places in the year 107) who convey'd theſe Traditions, and who having been *converſant with and inſtructed by the Apoſtles*, were without doubt ſufficiently qualified to give in Evidence concerning their Writings and to diſtinguiſh them from all others, which might go abroad falſly under their Names.

(*g*) *See his Addenda to p.* 73. *and his Chronology.*

This I take to be the main deſign of the Paſſage now before us, with what proceeds and follows in the Original (from Section 35 to Section 41 incluſively;) but becauſe there are ſome Particulars therein, which may deſerve a little further clearing or illuſtration, I ſhall employ a few Pages thereupon, and if in any thing I differ from that Learned Gentleman, I know he'l allow me the ſame Liberty of Thought and Judgment, concerning matters of Fact, which himſelf took before me.

XXI. While the Apoſtles travell'd up and down, Preaching in ſeveral Places and Countries, they Wrote thoſe Pieces, which we now have under their Names, but for the *moſt* part, as Criticks obſerve, *after* the middle of the Firſt Century. This is a ſufficient Reaſon, why in thoſe times of War and Perſecution, *ſome* of them might not come to the hands of *many*, who liv'd in *remote and diſtant Places*, till that Age was almoſt or perhaps quite expir'd. Though that *ſeveral* were carefully tranſmitted by the depoſitaries of them to *other* Churches and Perſons, with whom they had the moſt convenient Correſpondence, is a thing eaſy to be prov'd, becauſe-

cauſe we find them borrowed by the earlieſt Writers.

(*b*) *p.* 18, 60. (*i*) *p.* 64. (*k*) *p.* 4. (*l*) *p.* 12, 13, 15, 23, 47. 48. (*m*) *p.* 61. *Ox. Edit.* 4*to.* 1633. (*n*) *p.* 217. (*o*) *p.* 218. *Lond. Ed.* 4*to.* 1680.

* For thus there are two Paſſages of (*b*) St. *Luke*, and one (*i*) of St. *Peter*'s firſt Epiſtle, and another (*k*) of the Second to *Timothy*, and divers of the Epiſtle (*l*) to the *Hebrews*, made uſe of by *Clemens*, Biſhop of *Rome*; and the firſt Epiſtle (*m*) of St. *Paul* to the *Corinthians*, is very much recommended by the ſame Father to the Chriſtians of that City. *Barnabas* gives us the direct words of two Texts in St. (*n*) *Matthew* and (*o*) St. *Luke*. There are four or five Paſſages in *Hermas*, which ſeem to have great affinity with ſo many Texts in the *Old* and *New Teſtament*: But I own they may be diſputed, eſpecially by thoſe who look upon the Viſions and Converſations, mention'd in that Book, to have been real, and I will not inſiſt upon them, but only obſerve, that there is as much Evidence that this Author borrowed from the *New Teſtament* as there is that he borrowed from the *Old*. *Ignatius* mentions (*p*) St. *Paul*'s Epiſtle to the *Epheſians*, and ſeems plainly to have taken Expreſſions (*q*) from it, (*r*) from St.

(*p*) *Epiſ. to the Epheſ. p.* 24. [*q*] *Epiſ. to Polycarp p.* 13. [*r*] *Ib. p.* 11.

* There may be other Paſſages in the Epiſtle of St. *Clemens*, taken out of the New Teſtament, which have eſcap'd my Obſervation. And there are ſome (beſides theſe) of which I did take notice, but omitted them, becauſe they are in the Old Teſtament too, and therefore, for ought I could tell, *might* be borrowed from thence. That this Father had Read the Epiſtle to the *Romans*, there can be no doubt, and therefore I did not remark, that he Salutes the *Corinthians* almoſt in the very ſame words that St. *Paul* us'd to the *Romans*.

Matthew,

Matthew, and from the firſt (*s*) Epiſtle to the *Corinthians*. (*t*) *Polycarp* is Copious in his quotations. In him, we meet with Words taken out of St. *Matthew*, St. *Luke*, the *Acts*, the *Romans*, the firſt Epiſtle to the *Corinthians*, the *Galatians*, the *Epheſians*, the firſt Epiſtle of St. *Peter*, and of St. *John*, and he twice mentions St. *Paul*'s Epiſtle to the *Philippians*.

[*s*] *Epiſt. to the Epheſ. p.* 27. *Lond. Edit.* 4*to*, 1680.

[*t*] *In many places.*

All the Inference I intend to make from hence, is only this, that theſe Books, from whence the Authors juſt now mention'd, fetch'd all the Paſſages we refer to, were then undoubtedly diſperſ'd abroad in *ſome parts* of the Chriſtian World, ſince they had been Read by theſe Fathers, and were made uſe of by them in their Writings. And, I think, I need not attempt to prove, that they were look'd upon *as Canonical*, at the ſame time. For it is morally impoſſible to ſuppoſe, that Pieces Wrote or Authoriz'd by the Apoſtles, ſhould not be eſteem'd *Canonical or Rules of Faith* by all Chriſtians to whom they were communicated, ſince the Knowledge which they had of the Doctrin of Faith was entirely deriv'd from them and their Inſtructions.

It's true, the Writers we are now conſidering, very rarely give us † the Name of the Book or Author from whence they fetch any Paſſage, and therefore Mr. *D*'s remark is very juſt, that the ſucceeding Ages of the Church could not, *in ſuch caſes*, learn from them what Pieces were to be parts of the Chriſtian Canon. They produce Texts indeed from Authors that were Canonical, but they don't always tell us ſo, when they produce them; and therefore their Teſtimony alone is not ſufficient to inform us, what are the Genuine Writings of the Apoſtles and what are not. This we can learn from none but thoſe, who either recommend a particular Book by Name, or at leaſt tell us whence they draw their Paſſages. And this is ſo ſeldom done by the Authors now mention'd, that all the Evidence we can derive from them,

† This is urg'd as an Objection, that none of the Evangeliſts is call'd by his own Name, in the Writings of *Clemens*, &c. I grant it; but what would be infer'd from thence, beſides what is here conſider'd, I cannot imagine. Whatever is intended, will equally affect the Old Teſtament. For St. *Clemens*, among all the quotations he fetches thence, does not that I perceive (and I was careful in making the obſervation) ſo much as once *directly cite by Name* any of the Writers thereof, except *Moſes* and *David* once or twice, from which he Produces his Teſtimonies. And yet there's no queſtion, but he judg'd the *Old Teſtament* Canonical. As *Juſtin M.* certainly did the *New*; and yet though he makes uſe of many Places, out of ſeveral Books thereof, and ſpeaks of the Goſpels, and Monuments of the Apoſtles, in general, I am very much miſtaken, if he quotes any of them by Name, beſides the *Revelation*, which he expreſly aſcribes to St. *John* the Apoſtle.

will

will not extend to above (*u*) three or four Pieces. The aſſurance we have that the other Books of the *New Teſtament* are Canonical, muſt be taken from the Writers of the Second Century, at leaſt as far as we know now, (I mean ſuch Writers as follow'd *Ignatius* and *Polycarp* here mention'd by Mr. *D.*) and the Teſtimony of them is unexceptionable, ſince converſing with the Diſciples of the Apoſtles, they could eaſily be inform'd by them what Books were really Genuine and Apoſtolical.

[*u*] *The firſt Epiſtle to the Corinth. the Epiſtles to the Epheſ. and to the Philippians.*

But we are told, that *the Writers of thoſe times do not chequer their Works with Texts of the New Teſtament, which yet is the cuſtom of the more Modern, and was alſo theirs in ſuch Books as they acknowledg'd for Scripture. For they moſt frequently cite the Books of the Old Teſtament, and would doubtleſs have done ſo by thoſe of the New, if they had been receiv'd for Canonical.* That the Books of the *New Teſtament* could not fail of being judg'd *Canonical*, by thoſe who knew their Authors, has been obſerv'd already more then once ; and therefore I proceed to remark, that if theſe words refer to the latter Writers of the Canon, they are expreſs'd very obſcurely, and will fall under conſideration immediately. If they be deſign'd to comprehend *Clemens*, *Barnabas*, *Hermas*, *Ignatius* and *Polycarp* (and I think, they can't be underſtood otherwiſe) I muſt confeſs that I wonder very much at them. For the two firſt fetch Paſſages from the *New Teſtament as well* (though not ſo often) *as* from the *Old*. The third may be ſuppos'd to cite neither or both. The fourth and fifth have certainly more Texts out of the Goſpels and Epiſtles then out of the whole *Old Teſtament*.

And the latter of these two, I mean *Polycarp*, has above Twenty Passages out of the *New Testament* in his short Epistle, so that it may very well be say'd to be *chequer'd* with them.

XXII. Whether the later Writers of the *New Testament* saw all that had been Wrote by the former, I shall not take upon me to determine. But I think the not quoting them or the *seeming* contradictions between them, are no arguments to the contrary. For the *former* is the case of several Prophets and Writers of the *Old Testament*, who don't quote their Predecessors; and those things which now seem contradictions to us, might perhaps be little or none to them, who were acquainted with the Circumstances of the Age, and admit, it may be, as easy a solution, as the difference of the genealogies upon account of the Natural and Legal Fathers, does from (*x*) the relation of *Africanus*. Sure I am that St. *Peter* was acquainted with (*y*) some of St. *Paul*'s Epistles, and that they were then judg'd Canonical. And that *he* had also Read St. *Mark*'s Gospel, St. *Paul* that of St. *Luke*, and St. *John*, all the other three, has been above prov'd by Ecclesiastical Testimony. To which I shall add, that *Grotius* affirms St. *Luke* to have certainly Read the Gospels of St. *Matthew* and St. *Mark*, and proves it from hence, because in reporting the same Passages, he sometimes uses their very Words.

[x] See Eu. *Eccl. Hist. l.* 1. *c.* 7.

[y] 2 *Epist.* 3. 15, 16.

XXIII. I dare not affirm, that the Fathers of whom we are now speaking, cited any Texts from such Gospels, as are *properly Spurious*, because it does

does not appear to me; (z) much leſs that they attributed the ſame Authority to them, that they did to the Genuine Writings of the Apoſtles, becauſe of this there is no manner of Evidence. For though there be ſome Paſſages in them which are not mention'd in our Evangeliſts, and others differently expreſs'd from what we now Read, yet no ſuch conſequence can be drawn from theſe Premiſes.

[z] *See above Sect. V. in anſwer to the firſt Objection.*

For firſt, the Citations might perhaps be made from no Books at all. Thus, though it be true that St. *Paul*, St. *Barnabas*, and St. *Ignatius*, cite an Expreſſion or two as ſpoken by our Saviour, which are not to be found in our Goſpels, yet it does not follow that they took them from Spurious Writers; they might eaſily receive them from Ear-Witneſſes. They were remov'd at ſo little a diſtance from our Saviour, that they certainly convers'd with his immediate Diſciples, from whom they might hear Relations of ſeveral conſiderable Actions and Sayings of his, which were not recorded by the Evangeliſts.

Neither does it follow, that if a Paſſage be not expreſs'd juſt after the ſame manner that we find it in the *New Teſtament*, therefore it ought to be look'd upon as *interpolated* or drawn from the Books of ſome *Spurious Writers*. For it is well known, that many of the Fathers, as well of the later as of the firſt Ages, quote the Texts of Scripture by memory, and often deſign to give the Senſe, without confining themſelves to the Words, of the Original. Many Inſtances might be given of this Nature, but I ſhall refer the Reader at preſent only to the Epiſtle of St. *Barnabas*, where he'll find numerous

merous proofs of this assertion in Texts cited from the *Old Testament*; particularly (*a*) in the Promise of entring the Holy Land, (*b*) the Sacrificing of the *Goat* and (*c*) the Circumcision of the Heart.

(*a*) p. 221. (*b*) p. 228, 229. (*c*) p. 229.

But if we should go further, and suppose that some of the Writers of that Age, quoted other Gospels or Histories of our Lord, then those which are now esteem'd Authentick in the Church, yet I don't see what can be infer'd from thence, that may be in the least a Prejudice to our cause, or shew that there was no difference *then* put between Spurious and Genuine Writings. * For I think, it can't be question'd,

* Though it is possible there might be some Spurious Gospels at those times forg'd and set forth under great Names; yet that there were *some* too Wrote by honest Christians, besides the inspired ones, cannot, I think, be doubted by any who shall consider what is the usual Practice of Mankind on such *great* Occasions. And to some of these as well as the Gospels of St. *Matthew* and St. *Mark*, St. *Luke* in all probability refers at the beginning of his. For notwithstanding what our Author (*p.* 50.) and others besides him are pleas'd to say, yet I doubt not to affirm, that St. *Luke* does not fasten any bad Character on the Gospels he had Read, nor can his Words be drawn to insinuate any such thing without the greatest Violence. Nay it seems plain to me that the two first Verses of his Gospel intimate the direct contrary. And in this I am the more confirm'd, because since the Writing of this, I find that *Casaubon* and *Lightfoot* are of the same Opinion as to the whole; and *Grotius* seems to have judg'd so too in the main. Only he thinks that some of these Writers, gathering what they related, from uncertain Report, fell into great Errors. That may be (and questionless was) true of some, but not of all. And St. *Luke* does not seem to have seen any Spurious (if at least any such were extant so early) or Erroneous Gospels. For he does not charge those, who labour'd before him in that Argument, either with wilful falsifications or negligent mistakes.

but

but that ſeveral would Publiſh Accounts of the Life and Actions of our Saviour, who were his honeſt and Faithful Diſciples, and inſerted nothing in the Story, but what they had good ground to believe true and certain, though they were not infallible in their Narrations. From ſome of theſe, the Writers that follow'd after might quote Paſſages, and that juſtifiably enough, as from thoſe, whom they eſteem'd (and who were as to the main) faithful Hiſtorians. Though when the four Goſpels, which we now have, were *Publiſh'd to the whole Church*, the eſtimation of thoſe other Hiſtories might ſink, and ſo they not be tranſmitted to Poſterity, as not being of equal Authority.

XXIV. And as there were *Hiſtories of the Life and Preaching* of our Lord, ſo were there too without doubt Relations of the Miracles and Actions of his Followers, and *Summaries of the Doctrines and Inſtructions of the Apoſtles:* which being drawn up by thoſe who heard and convers'd with them, were really of great uſe to the faithful, and might be quoted by them upon occaſion without any manner of blame. Many of theſe, Learned Men judge it probable, were in proceſs of time collected into one Body with the *Doctrines of Apoſtolical Men* written afterwards, and make up the beſt and moſt Inſtructive part of thoſe, which are call'd the *Apoſtolical Conſtitutions.* Though the addition of ſeveral Impertinences, Errors, Hereſies and Contradictions, and eſpecially the *pretending* (in divers places) *the whole to have been dictated by the Twelve Apoſtles*, *St.* James *Bp. of* Jeruſalem (whom they Erroneouſly diſtinguiſh from the

Apoſtle of that Name) *and St.* Paul, *in the preſence of the Seven Deacons*, (though it's plain St. *Stephen* ſuffer'd Martyrdom, before St. *Paul*'s Converſion,) cauſe the compoſition, as we now have it, to be juſtly cenſur'd for Suppoſitious.

From what has been ſay'd, it is apparent, I think, that we ought not preſently to conclude every thing which is not found in our Bibles, to be fetch'd from *Spurious Writings*, ſince nothing deſerves *that Name*, but what is properly *a Forgery*. *Several of theſe* there were indeed in thoſe early days, but it no ways appears that the Writers we are now diſcourſing of, borrow'd from them. More likely it is that what they took from Books not Apoſtolical, was from the accounts (given by the true Diſciples of our Lord) of the Actions, and Preaching and Doctrine of himſelf and his Apoſtles; which though they were not part of the Canon, yet were really uſeful, and might, for that reaſon, be Read with Profit and quoted with Authority as Pieces Eccleſiaſtical.

XXV. But there is one Particular, which deſerves a more accurate examination. It is *p.* 72. of our Authors Citation out of Mr. *D.* were *two Johns* are reckon'd among the Writers of the *New Teſtament*. This that Learned Gentleman had before enlarg'd on in the *4th* and *5th* Sections of the ſame Diſcourſe, and will have *John*, a Presbyter of that time, and not *John* the Apoſtle, to have been the Author of the *Revelation* and alſo of the Second and Third Epiſtle. The main Arguments he inſiſts upon are, (1.) The Authority of *Dionyſius* Biſhop of *Alexandria*, part

part of whoſe Diſcourſe upon that Subject, we have in the (*d*) *Eccleſiaſtical Hiſtory* of *Euſebius*. (*d*) *l.* 7. *c.* (2.) The Reaſons of that Father, which are 25. the difference of the Style, and that the Author of the *Revelation* ſets down his Name frequently, which St. *John* the Apoſtle does not in his other Pieces.

To which I Anſwer, That neither the Authority nor the Reaſons of *Dionyſius* affect the two Epiſtles. *He does not at all argue againſt them*; and therefore they may be the Genuine Works of that Apoſtle, to whom (as he owns) they were commonly aſcrib'd, for all him. And *Monſieur du Pin*, who has the deſerv'd Reputation of an able Critick, tells us *that the Style, the Spirit, and the Thoughts of theſe Epiſtles*, as well as the concurring Judgment of moſt of the Fathers, *make it evident that they belong to the Evangeliſt*.

Setting them therefore aſide, I ſhall conſider what force there is in theſe Reaſons as they are levell'd againſt the *Revelation*. And I muſt ſay, that, if they have any ſtrength in them, they may as well be urg'd to prove the *Prophecy of Jeremy* and the *Lamentations* were not wrote by the ſame Perſon. For in the former, the Prophet often Names himſelf, which he does not once in the latter; and the difference of Expreſſion ſeems every jot as great between theſe two Pieces, as it is between them we are now conſidering.

Neither is it any wonder to find the ſame Perſon (as Dr. *Cave* obſerves in another caſe) vaſtly to alter and vary his Style, according to the *Times when*, or the *Perſons to whom*, or the *Subjects about which*, he Writes; or the *Temper and*

and diſpoſition he is in, when he Writes, or *the Care*, that is us'd in doing it. So that it is Evident, nothing *certain* can in this caſe be infer'd from that Particular.

To the Authority of *Dionyſius* and his Reaſons too, we oppoſe the Judgment of many of the Ancients, who were of another Opinion. The Arguments he urges, were obvious to them as well as him. They knew what difference there was between the Style of the other Pieces of St. *John* and the *Revelation*; they knew, that in one, the Writers Name was ſeveral times mention'd and not at all in the other; and yet concluded there was no force in theſe Arguments, concluded notwithſtanding them, that all the Pieces were Wrote by the ſame Author, even the Apoſtle, of which they could eaſily receive information as being remov'd at ſo little a diſtance from his time. Two of them ſeem to have been Born ſoon after, if not before his Death.

Let us hear therefore what may be alledg'd on the other ſide. (1.) The Author of the *Revelation* (*e*) tells us himſelf, that he was Baniſh'd to the Iſle of *Patmos*, for the Word of God, and the Teſtimony of Jeſus. Now that this was the caſe of St. *John* the Apoſtle, we have the Witneſs of (*f*) *Tertullian*, (*g*) *Clemens* of *Alexandria*, (*h*) *Euſebius*, (*i*) *Jerome*, &c. (2.) We have the expreſs Teſtimonies of the Ancients, that the Apoſtle, (and not another *John*) was he who Wrote the *Revelation*. This is affirm'd by (*k*) *Juſtin Martyr*, by *Origen*, by *Tertullian*. *Clemens* indeed of *Alexandria*, attributes it ſimply to St. *John*, without any addition, but then Mr. *D.* himſelf owns (*Sect.* 20.)

(*e*) *c.* 1. *v.* 9.

(*f*) *Of Preſcript. c.* 36.

(*g*) *In Euſeb. Hiſt. l.* 3. *c.* 23.

(*h*) *l.* 3. *c.* 18.

(*i*) *In Eccleſ. Writers in* John.

(*k*) *See all these above Sect. XI.*

20.) that it is evident by the Circumſtances of the Relation in *Euſebius l.* 3. *c.* 23. that the Apoſtle, and no other, is deſign'd by him. *Irenæus* frequently cites it under the Name (*l*) *of John the Diſciple of the Lord*, which is *the very Expreſſion* he uſes when he (*m*) ſpeaks *of the Apoſtle*; and he tells us alſo, that he who ſaw thoſe Viſions, was the Diſciple (*n*) which *lay in our Saviours Boſom*, which was the Apoſtle too. And he again informs us (*l.* 5. *c.* 30.) that he had the Explication of a paſſage there mention'd, from thoſe *who convers'd with St.* John *the Author*; and they certainly *could and would* tell him, which of the *Johns* it was. And therefore ſince he, beſides all the others before-mention'd, fixes it on the Apoſtle, it is, I think, an unanſwerable Argument, that he, and not the Presbyter, is the Perſon to whom it ought to be aſcrib'd.

(*l*) *l.* 4. *c.* 37. *and* 50. *l.* 5. *c.* 26. (*m*) *l.* 2. *c.* 39. *l.* 3. *c.* 1. (*n*) *l.* 4. *c.* 37.

I now return to our Author, who tells us that the Paſſage he cited from Mr. *D. will furniſh thoſe who have an inclination to Write on this Subject with many curious diſquiſitions, wherein to ſhow their Penetration and Judgment.* It was not my own Inclination, but the deſign of ſerving an Honourable Perſon to whom I am much oblig'd, which drew me to Write upon this Subject, neither do I pretend to a greater ſhare of *Penetration and Judgment* then my Neighbours; but yet I ſhall venture to ſay, that I think it is no great preſumption to undertake the difficulties which are here propos'd by our Author, nor any mighty task to Anſwer them.

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XXVI. The firſt difficulty is, *How* (*o*) *the immediate Succeſſors and Diſciples of the Apoſtles could ſo groſly confound the Genuine Writings of their Maſters with ſuch as were falſly attributed to them.*

(*o*) *p.* 79.

To this I reply, that it does not appear to me, that they ever did (groſly, or not groſly) miſtake any Spurious Pieces for the Genuine Writings of the Apoſtles. They have indeed a few Paſſages (of which more in the proper Place) that do not occur in our Bibles, but that they were taken from Books *Publiſh'd under the Names of the Apoſtles*, and which *they judg'd to have been really the Apoſtles Works*, will puzzle our Author, with all his Learning about him, to make out. But if the thing had happen'd, and ſome ſubtile Sophiſter had ſo far impos'd upon *Clemens*, *Ignatius*, and the reſt, by counterfeiting their Inſtructors Hands and Styles, as to put a falſe Epiſtle or Goſpel upon them *for a while*, (of which I am not ſenſible,) this would not have been ſo wonderful a thing, as we are made to believe, ſince even *Scriveners* and *Merchants*, thoſe cunning Maſters of defence, have yet been trick'd after this manner.

However I ſhall readily yield, that (whether the Apoſtolick Perſons juſt now mention'd were ſo impos'd on or no, and I believe they were not, yet) many of that Age, might and probably were deceiv'd, for ſome time, with Suppoſititious Writings, uſher'd into the World, under the Title of great Names. And this conceſſion will make room for our Author's ſecond difficulty.

(*p*) *Since*

(*p*) *Since they were in the dark, how came others after them to a better light?* Before I give an anſwer to this queſtion, I cannot but remark, that it comes very oddly from our Author, who pretends to make ſuch diſcoveries, and undertakes to prove thoſe Pieces full of Ignorance and Superſtition, which had been generally well eſteem'd till his days. Do you think, Sir, there was never an *I. T.* among the Ancients? None that could ſmell out an Impoſture, or by making a few remarks and asking a few queſtions, find that a Book was aſcrib'd to a wrong Author? You may think thus if you pleaſe, and value your ſelf as much as you can upon the account of your great Atchievements; but I believe others are of Opinion, that, if the Fathers had gone your untoward way to work, and dealt no fairer, when they were in queſt of Forgeries, then you have done with the Evidences in relation to the *Eikon Baſilike*, many of thoſe cheats might have remain'd longer in credit, which yet *they* quickly flung out of doors, only by the aſſiſtance of a little Reaſon, Honeſty, and common Senſe. We had an inſtance of this nature among us at the beginning of the late Revolution. Three Declarations were then Publiſh'd in the Name of the Prince of *Orange*, and eſteem'd his for ſome time by the whole Nation. But upon a ſtrict examination of the matter, the *Third* was found Suppoſititious, diſown'd by the pretended Author, (*q*) and acknowledg'd by all to be a Forgery. And thus it was in the Primitive times. Some indeed of the Pieces which appear'd in the Apoſtles Names, ſeem to have been ſo contrary to their Doctrine, that they

XXVII.

(*p*) *p.* 79.

(*q*) *Hiſtory of the Deſertion. p.* 89.

they quickly ſunk and were rejected on all hands. But others, being of a more skilful compoſition, preſerv'd their Reputation for a longer time, and were eſteem'd by ſuch as knew no better, for the Monuments of them, whoſe Names they carried in their front. However theſe, by comparing them with their Genuine Writings, or enquiring of the Apoſtles, or thoſe who convers'd with and were inſtructed by them, had their Glorious Vizours pluck'd off and were expos'd as Impoſtures. But this could not be done ſo ſoon as the Third Declaration was unmask'd here. It was a ſingle Piece, aſcrib'd to a ſingle Perſon, and ſcatter'd abroad no further then the compaſs of a narrow Iſland, and therefore Application might in a few days be made to the Prince, as it was, and the cheat, by that means, ſpeedily lay'd open. Whereas in the caſe, concerning which we are now diſcourſing, the Forgeries were *many*, they were attributed to *ſeveral Perſons*, and ſpread abroad over *different Places* of the Chriſtian Church, ſo that it muſt neceſſarily require a conſiderable time, before they could be ſufficiently examin'd, before the pretended Authors, or thoſe acquainted with them, could be conſulted. But at laſt Truth prevail'd, and all the Impoſtures of the firſt and alſo of the ſecond Age, when they afterwards appear'd, were (as we learn from Eccleſiaſtical Story) found out to be what they really were, and as ſuch ſlighted and generally undervalued. Though ſtill, after the cheat was expos'd, Learned Men us'd them upon occaſion, and quoted ſuch ſingle Paſſages out of them, as they thought might be

of

of value, and Pertinent to the deſigns upon which they were Writing.

I proceed now to our Authors third difficulty, (*r*) *Why all thoſe Books, which are cited by* Clemens *and the reſt, ſhould not be accounted equally Authentick.* Whoever Reads this Paſſage, and does not underſtand the caſe, will, I believe, be apt to imagine that the Fathers here refer'd to, quote many Books that have Relation to the ſtate of things under the Goſpel, ſome of which we do, upon their Authority, admit for Canonical, while we reject others, that are equally cited by them, as Spurious. XXVIII. (*r*) P. 79.

How far we make uſe of theſe Fathers for ſettling the Canon, has been above explain'd. It's manifeſt from what is there ſay'd, (*s*) that we employ them, only (in conjunction with others) to aſſert the Title of three or four Pieces. So many they expreſly Name and aſcribe to their proper Authors, and thereby teach us that they were compos'd by the Apoſtles, and conſequently ought to be reckon'd as Wrote by Inſpiration, and of Divine Authority. We infer nothing from them to juſtify the reſt, but ſupport them by other Evidence. (*s*) *Sect. XXI.*

Well, but ought not the Teſtimony of theſe Fathers be allow'd in behalf of other Pieces, which they quote, and transfer them from the Rank of Spurious, wherein they are now plac'd by ſome, to that of Canonical Writings? Why, truly, much might be done, if we *knew what the Books were*, and *that they deſign'd to quote them as the Genuine Writings of the Apoſtles.* But this is our unhappineſs (of which our Author ſeems not to have been ſenſible, though he has undertaken,

undertaken, upon occaſion, to blaſt the credit of all theſe Pieces together) that though *Clemens* has quoted three, *Ignatius* as many, and *Barnabas* ſeven or eight ſhort Paſſages, that do not occur in our Books of Scripture, yet they neither give us the Name *of the Treatiſe*, nor yet of *the Author*, whence they produce them, and how, without that, the Books or the Authors ſhould be put into the Canon, I can't imagine.

However, I love to deal fairly, and ſhall own that one of the Paſſages, which we find in (*t*) *Ignatius*, is ſaid to have been found in the Goſpel according to the *Hebrews*, which is the ſame with that of the *Nazarens*. So it may be, but *Ignatius* does not quote it from thence. He might have it from other Books beſides that, or receive it from Tradition, or take it upon Memory. The Words in *Ignatius* are, *Handle me, and feel me, and ſee that I am not an Incorporeal* † *Spirit or Apparition.* In (*u*) St. *Luke* we Read, *Handle me and ſee, for a Spirit hath not Fleſh and Bones, as ye ſee me have.* The Senſe is exactly the ſame in both, and if the Father made the quotation, without looking into the Book, he might eaſily miſtake as far as this comes to.

(*t*) *Ep. to the Smyrneans p.* 3.

(*u*) *C.* 24. *v.* 39.

But what, if we grant our Author all he can deſire, and ſhould yield that this Paſſage was

† I render the *Greek* (δαιμόνιον) Spirit or Apparition, becauſe one of thoſe Words is always us'd by the *Engliſh* to expreſs the ſame thing, which is here intended by the *Greek*.

taken

taken by *Ignatius* out of the Goſpel according to the *Hebrews*, (which will never be prov'd,) what can he infer from thence? *That* we ſhall eaſily ſee, if we compare this with thoſe places, where Texts taken out of the Goſpels and Epiſtles have been mention'd by theſe Writers. We find, for Inſtance, that St. *Clemens* gives us ſeveral Paſſages that are to be met with, in the Epiſtle to the *Hebrews*, that St. *Ignatius* alſo gives us one or two, that are in the Goſpel according to St. *Matthew* or the Epiſtle to the *Corinthians*. All that we argue *from hence*, is, that thoſe Books, from which theſe two Fathers borrow thoſe Paſſages, were then extant and abroad in the Church. But we cannot, we do not *hence* infer, that they were Canonical or Wrote by thoſe Apoſtles, whoſe Names they now bear; becauſe neither *Clemens* nor *Ignatius* tell us ſo, and therefore *that* muſt be Learn'd from other Authors. In like manner, ſuppoſing that *Ignatius* took the expreſſion we are now conſidering, from the Goſpel according to the *Hebrews*, all we can gather from thence, is, that there was ſuch a Goſpel then extant, wherein that paſſage was Read. But that it was of Divine Authority, or Wrote by any of the Apoſtles, we cannot gather, for St. *Ignatius* ſays no ſuch thing; we muſt learn that, if it can be learn'd, from other Writers. Since then we allow as much Authority to this Father in one caſe, as we do to him or St. *Clemens* in the other, certainly our Author can deſire no more, and therefore I ſuppoſe we are agreed as to this matter.

But * perhaps it may be Objected, that if we grant this, we grant that St. *Ignatius* quoted a Spurious Goſpel. To this I anſwer, (1.) That the queſtion before us at preſent, is not, whether this Father quoted a Spurious Goſpel or no, but whether, by borrowing a Paſſage after this manner, from the Goſpel according to the *Hebrews*, he advances it into the Canon. The contrary to which I have plainly prov'd to be true. (2.) This Goſpel, with the additions, ought not to be look'd upon as Spurious or a Forgery, but rather as a Piece of *Eccleſiaſtical Hiſtory*. See above at the end of *Section XVI.*

And if we proceed to *Hermas*, it muſt be owned that he produces not one Text (that we can be ſure of) out of either the *Old* or *New Teſtament*; but quotes one ſhort Sentence out of an *Apocryphal* Book, call'd the *Propheſies of Eldad and Medad*. And therefore ſince we make no manner of uſe of this Writer for the Eſtabliſhing the Canon, we cannot be oblig'd by our Authors Argument to embrace this *Apocryphal* Piece upon his Authority. Only I ſhall add, that the Paſſage is good and true, whoſoever ſay'd it, *The Lord is nigh unto all thoſe, who turn unto him*; and therefore might be quoted,

* Whether what our Author produces out of *Origen*, as from *Ignatius* concerning *the Devils being ignorant of the Virginity of the Virgin Mary*, &c. be deſigned as an Objection againſt the genuineneſs of that Epiſtle wherein theſe Expreſſions are found, or no, I cannot tell. If it be, I ſhall refer the Reader for an Anſwer to A. Bp. *Uſher* in his *Prolegomena* to the Epiſtles of that Father. c. 12. *p.* lxxxi. *Ox. Edit.* 1644. 4°.

not

not upon the Authority of the Book, but the Intrinſick Value of the Expreſſion, which may be cited without danger, from the Mouth or Pen of the greateſt Impoſtor.

And thus I have anſwer'd our Author's third difficulty, *why all the Books, which are cited by Clemens and the reſt ſhould not be equally Authentick*; and ſhown, that there is but *one ſingle Piece*, that we count Suppoſititious, *quoted by Name*, and that too, not referring to the time of the *New* but *Old Teſtament*; and quoted it is by an Author of whoſe Teſtimony we make no uſe in ſettling the Canon, and therefore we cannot be tied and bound by it in the caſe of this pretended Prophecy; neither indeed ought any one elſe. For he is alone in the matter (as far as appears at preſent,) and contradicts the whole *Jewiſh* Church, who knew nothing of this Book nor ever admitted it among their Canonical Writings. As for the Paſſage of *Ignatius*, pretended to be borrowed from the Goſpel according to the *Hebrews*, I hope, what has been above-ſay'd, is ſatisfactory; and for the reſt, in him and *Clemens* and *Barnabas*, when our Author ſhall pleaſe to tell us, *whence they were fetch'd, and under what notion they are quoted*, he ſhall hear more of my mind.

Polycarp has not one Paſſage out of any Spurious or unknown Writer that I can find, and therefore I ſuppoſe he may be diſmiſs'd without further trouble.

The laſt difficulty, is, (*a*) *What ſtreſs ſhould be lay'd on the Teſtimony of thoſe Fathers, who not only contradict one another, but are often inconſiſtent* XXIX.

(*a*) p. 80.

ſiſtent with themſelves in the relations of the very ſame facts.

Here, I think, our Author's Expreſſion is obſcure. He does not tell us, whom he means by *Fathers*, or *what Contradictions* (as he calls them) he had more eſpecially in his Eye, when he Wrote theſe Words. I was once about venturing to gueſs, but upon Second Thoughts forbore, leſt I ſhould be cenſur'd as ſeverely as Mr. *Bl.* was, for miſtaking (or too well underſtanding) his meaning, and be told, that I am one of thoſe, (*b*) *who are Sagacious enough to diſcover the hidden Poyſon of every Word, and will be ſure to give loud warning of the danger, to ſhew where the Snake lies in the Graſs, and to tell what's in the Belly of the Trojan Horſe.* And therefore, that I may avoid ſuch a dreadful Thunderclap, ſhall ſay no more, but that he's in the Clouds, and there I muſt leave him for the preſent.

(*b*) *p.* 81.

Poſtcript.

Poſtcript.

THere are two or three Paſſages, which would not fall in regularly with the Foregoing Diſcourſe, without too much breaking the Coherence, therefore I ſhall conſider them here.

The firſt is, what we Read, (*p.* 37. *n.* 6.) and is in the following Words, *We need not produce our Authors for the Canons and Conſtitutions of the Apoſtles, ſince ſo many Learned Members of the Church of* England *have Written large Volums to prove 'em Genuine.* Now this directly overthrows what has been aſſerted at the beginning of theſe Papers. For if the Genuine Works of the Apoſtles, and ſuch as were Authoriz'd by them, make up the Code of the *New Teſtament*, why ſhould not theſe Conſtitutions and Canons partake of the ſame honour too, ſince our Author tells us, they are aſſerted Genuine by many Learned Members of the Church of *England* in large Volums, Wrote for that very end and purpoſe? To which I ſhall reply no more at preſent, but only this, that I was much ſurpriz'd at this aſſertion of of our Authors. For I thought I had known, ſo far at leaſt, what *moſt* of the Learned Men of our Church, whether Living or Dead, have XXX.

deliver'd in this matter, as that *large Treatiſes* of *many* of them upon this Subject had not eſcap'd me; and I thought too, that I had underſtood ſo much of the merits of the cauſe, as to give me reaſon to believe, that very few impartial and underſtanding Perſons were like to maintain what our Author ſays they do in the caſe, and therefore was ready, without any farther debate, to pronounce him miſtaken. But becauſe I was unwilling he ſhould charge me, as he does Mr. *B.* (*c*) *with making my own Reading and Knowledge the meaſure of Truth*, (who had too been retir'd from the Publick Stations of Learning for many years together,) I reſolv'd to enquire of ſuch as I thought could inform me, whether any thing had been lately (or formerly) Publiſh'd, which might juſtify our Author's affirmation. But I ſoon found that they knew no more in the matter then my ſelf; and therefore I ſhall deſire *I. T.* at his leaſure, to acquaint the World † *who thoſe many Learned Members of the Church of* England *are, that have Written large Volumes to prove the Conſtitutions and Canons, we are now conſidering, and*

(*c*) *P.* 54.

† To prevent all cavilling, I here own (what I obſerv'd many years ago) that there is one Learned Writer of our Church, who does upon occaſion ſpeak as favourably of the *Conſtitutions*, as *Turrian* the *Jeſuite* himſelf could do, who Wrote a Book in defence of them. But then I muſt add, that he gives us no Reaſons for his Opinion, and what he ſays, is comprehended within the compaſs of a few lines. And I am ſure, that a *ſingle Perſon* and *two or three Sentences*, can, by no Logick, be multiplied into *many Members* and *large Volumes*.

as we now have them, to be the Genuine Works of the Apoſtles.

There is another Paſſage of our Author, (*d*) where he ridicules *Ireneus*, as having argued (*d*) p. 50, very ſillily concerning the number of the Goſ- 51. pels. To give a large account of the matter would be tedious and impertinent (ſince the whole thing is a meer Cavil,) and therefore I ſhall only remark briefly,

(1.) That our Author groſly wrongs *Ireneus* in his *Latin* quotation. For the Father having (*l.* 3. *c.* 9, 10. and part of the 11*th.*) argued againſt the Hereticks of thoſe times from the four Goſpels, adds, that theſe Goſpels were receiv'd, one or other of them, by the Hereticks themſelves, *and therefore his argument from them was ſtrong and true.* Theſe laſt words our Author parts from the *reſt of the Sentence* to which they belong and tacks them to what follows, as if *Ireneus* had ſay'd, the Argument for the four Goſpels from the four Regions is firm and ſtrong; whereas (whatever he might think) he does *not* ſay ſo.

(2.) Neither does he ſay afterward, that *they are vain and unlearn'd and bold, who reject the number of the four Goſpels*, thus prov'd from the four Regions, *&c.* (as our Author repreſents him,) but thoſe who reject *the things*, which he judg'd were foreſignified as *the ſubject of the ſeveral Goſpels*, ('tis *Speciem Evangelij*, and *Perſonas Evangelij*,) by the four Faces in the *Cherubim* of *Ezekiel*, that is (as he tells us) the

Humanity, the *Prophetical* and *Prieſtly* Offices, and *Divinity* of our Saviour.

(3.) After all, the Father does not pretend to prove from the four Quarters or the four Winds, that *the Goſpels we have were Wrote by thoſe Perſons whoſe Names they bear :* For *that* he Learn'd from ſuch as convers'd with the Writers themſelves, as was above-obſerv'd. Neither does he pretend to prove from thence (*e*) *that the Goſpels were Canonical or Rules of Faith* ; for that depends upon their being Wrote or Authoriz'd by the Apoſtles ; ſo that the merits of the cauſe under debate are not in the leaſt concern'd in the Argument. All that he pretends to, is, that as there were Four Principal Quarters of the World, *&c.* and no more, ſo God would have it that there ſhould be four Goſpels in the World and no more ; and did think fit to foreſignify, the *Temper* of the Writers, and the *Subject* of each Book by the *four Faces* in *Ezekiel's Cherubim.* Now what though there ſeems to be more of *Fancy* then *Solidity*, more of *Plauſible Alluſion* then *cloſe Reaſoning* in this way of Arguing, yet I don't ſee why our Author ſhould ſo much inſult upon the Father for it, ſince Inſtances of the like nature may be found in Eminent Writers of all Profeſſions, and Heathens as well as Chriſtians. If we make it our buſineſs to *Weed* Books, which are otherwiſe Learned and Rational, and pick out the Weakeſt Expreſſions we can find in them, we ſhall proceed very unjuſtly, and I doubt, that very few, if this method be us'd, will eſcape Cenſure.

(e) p. 19, &c.

see above p. 7

I

I did not think to have ſay'd any thing to our Authors Reflection (*f*) on the Epiſtle of St. *Barnabas*, becauſe I am not concern'd, at preſent, whether it be Genuine or no. But obſerving that he deſigns to improve the Expreſſion he fetches thence to the Prejudice of the Chriſtian Religion, I thought my ſelf oblig'd to add a few lines upon that occaſion. The Words in the Original are thus, Chriſt *choſe for his Apoſtles —— thoſe who were the greateſt of Sinners, that he might ſhow, how he came to call, not the Righteous, but Sinners to Repentance.* We have little or no account in the Scripture of the Apoſtles Morals, before they were choſen by our Saviour, and therefore we'll, for the preſent, let this Paſſage of *Barnabas* go for true. What will follow? Nothing elſe, as far as I ſee, but that our Lord was an Excellent Phyſician of Souls, who wrought ſo perfect and Effectual a cure upon Men in ſuch a dangerous condition, and brought them to a true Senſe of Piety and Religion, for the Encouragement of others to Repent and Reform. Ay, but if they were once ſuch, (*g*) *this would Rob us of an Argument, we draw from their Integrity and Simplicity, againſt Infidels.* Would it ſo indeed? Methinks now this is very ſtrange, and does not conclude ſo well, as the Argument of *Ireneus* from the four Winds, with which we ſee what a ſtir our Author made, a little before. For may not a Wicked Man prove good, and may he not give us ſuch Evidences of the Sincerity of his Reformation, that we are bound in Juſtice to believe him? Let us examine the caſe

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(*f*) *p.* 44, 45.

(*g*) *p.* 45.

caſe a little, and ſee what Arguments can be produc'd for the uprightneſs and integrity of the Apoſtles after their Converſion. They Preach'd a moſt Excellent and Holy Religion over all the World, and endeavour'd to bring People every where to the Belief and Practice of it. And that they were in good earneſt in all their undertakings, and did not act a part for carrying on any Worldly deſign, is apparent from hence, that they *knowingly and willingly* expos'd themſelves to Pains, to Troubles, to Loſſes, to Contempt, to Perſecutions, to Torments, to Death it ſelf. This, I think, is ſufficient to ſhow, that they really believ'd what they affirm'd, concerning the Doctrine, Works and Reſurrection of our Saviour; that they did not deſign to put a Trick upon Mankind in the Relations, they gave thereof, ſince they readily expos'd themſelves to ſuch Sufferings for the aſſerting of it. And that they aſſerted nothing but what was true, God himſelf did alſo further atteſt, by the Miracles he enabled them to work, of which we have uncontroulable proof, as has been ſo often obſerv'd by others that I need not to inſiſt upon it here. So that though we do ſuppoſe the Epiſtle of St. *Barnabas* to be Genuine, and the Paſſage quoted from it to be really true, yet it is plain nothing can be thence inferr'd to prove our Religion falſe or ill grounded.

Since

Since the finiſhing this, * I thought it ad- XXXIII.
viſable, for the preventing Doubts or Cavils, to ſubjoyn the Teſtimonies of *Ireneus* and *Tertullian*, for thoſe Books of Scripture which belong to that, we above call'd *the firſt Canon.* I begin with *Ireneus.*

In his Third Book and (*b*) firſt Chapter, he expreſly aſſerts the four Evangeliſts *by Name* to be the Authors of the four Goſpels. And particularly, he attributes that, which goes under his Name, to St. *Matthew*, (*i*) (*l.* 3. *c.* 18.) St. *Mark*'s, to him ((*k*) *l.* 3. *c.* 18.) that of St. *Luke*, to him ((*l*) *l.* 3. *c.* 11.) and St. *John*'s, to that Apoſtle ((*m*) *l.* 3. *c.* 11.)

(*b*) p. 229.
(*i*) p. 275.
(*k*) p. 276.
(*l*) p. 254.
(*m*) p. 257.

He aſſerts the Acts of the Apoſtles to have been Wrote by St. *Luke* the (*n*) Evangeliſt (*l.* 3. *c.* 14, 15.) and attributes all the following Epiſtles to St. *Paul*, in the following Places.

(*n*) p. 271. 273.

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* I was perſwaded by a Friend to add the enſuing Catalogue from *Ireneus* and *Tertullian*, to which I eaſily agreed, as having made the Collection many years ago, when I Read thoſe Fathers, for my own Satisfaction. The Edition of *Tertullian* that I us'd, was Printed at *Paris* 1669, and that of *Ireneus* is pretended, in the Title Page, to be Printed there too, 1675.

The

The Epiſtle to the *Romans* —— *l.* 2. *c.* 38. *p.* 190

The firſt to the *Corinthians* —— *l.* 1. *c.* 1. *p.* 33
Second to the *Corinth.* —— *l.* 3. *c* 7. *p.* 248

The Epiſtle to the *Galatians*--- *l.* 3. *c.* 7. *ibid.*
to the *Epheſians* —— *l.* 5. *c.* 14. *p.* 455
to the *Philippians* —— *l.* 4. *c.* 34. *p.* 363
to the *Coloſſians* —— *l.* 3. *c.* 14. *p.* 267

The firſt to the *Theſſalonians*-- *l.* 5. *c.* 6. *p.* 442
Second to the *Theſſal.* —— *l.* 3. *c.* 7. *p.* 249

The firſt to *Timothy* —— —— *l.* 2. *c.* 19. *p.* 172
(and Pref. *p.* 3
Second to *Timothy* —— *l.* 3. *c.* 14. *p.* 267

The Epiſtle to *Titus* —— *l.* 3. *c.* 3. *p.* 233

To St. *Peter* he aſcribes the firſt Epiſtle, which goes under his Name, (*l.* 4. *c.* 22. (*o*))--- to St. *John* the Apoſtle, his firſt Epiſtle (*l.* 3. *c.* 18. (*p*))

(*o*) *p.* 338.
(*p*) *p.* 277.

There are ſeveral other Places (I may ſay numerous, for moſt of them) where theſe Books are aſcrib'd to thoſe Writers, whoſe Names they now bear; but I thought one Teſtimony ſufficient to Evince what Opinion *Ireneus* had of each Book. And I ſhall uſe the ſame method as to *Tertullian.*

He

He aſſigns the four Goſpels to the four *Evangeliſts*, by whoſe Names they are call'd, (*l.* 4. againſt *Marcion c.* 2. and 5. *p.* 414. and 416.)

The Acts of the Apoſt. to St. *Luke.* } *Treatiſe of Faſting c.* 10. *p.* 549

The following Epiſtles are attributed to St. *Paul*, in the following Places.

The Epiſt. to the *Romans*--*Scorpiace c.* 13. *p.* 498

The firſt and ſecond Epiſt. to the *Corinth* } *Of Chaſtity. c.* 13, 14. *p.* 564, 565

The Epiſt. to the *Galatians.* } *l.* 5. againſt *Marcion c.* 2. *p.* 462

to the *Epheſians* } *Of the Reſur. of the Fleſh.* } *c.* 40. *p.* 349

to the *Philippians* —— *ib. c.* 23. *p.* 339

to the *Coloſſians* —— *ib. p.* 338

The firſt and ſecond Epiſtles to the *Theſſalonians.* } —— *ib. c.* 24. *p.* 339

The firſt to *Tim.* -- againſt *Praxeas c.* 15. *p.* 509

The ſecond to *Tim.* -- { *Of the Reſur. of the Fleſh* } *c.* 23 *p.* 339

The

The Epiſt. to *Titus* -- *Of Preſcription c.6. p.204*

The firſt of St. *Peter*, is quoted as his; *Scorpiace c. 12. p. 497.*

And ſo likewiſe the firſt of St. *John* —— againſt *Praxeas c. 15. p. 508.*

Thoſe of the *Seven Controverted Pieces*, which are quoted by either of theſe Fathers, don't properly belong to this place, and are mention'd above (*Sect. XI.*) What ground we have to inſert the *Epiſtle of St. Paul to Philemon*, in the number of thoſe Writings, which were never diſputed, ſee before (*Sect. IV.*)

From what has been here produc'd, it is evident that theſe two Fathers attributed all the Books above-mention'd, to thoſe Perſons, by whom we now think they were Wrote, and (*q*) conſequently eſteem'd them Canonical.

(*q*) *See Sect. II.*

XXXIV. And that the whole Catholick Church in their days was of the ſame Opinion, is evident from the Teſtimonies of (*r*) *Euſebius* and (*s*) *Gregory Nazianzen*, who reckon theſe Books as thoſe which were never queſtion'd. And ſo much may we learn likewiſe from theſe two Fathers, now under conſideration, in the paſſages refer'd to above, (*p.* 36. and 72.) part of which it may not be impertinent to ſet down here at large.

(*r*) *l.* 3. *c.* 25.

(*s*) *In the places cited above Sect. IV.*

Irenæus

Ireneus tells us, (*t*) that true Knowledge conſiſts in underſtanding the Doctrine of the Apoſtles and the Ancient ſtate of the Church *in the whole World*, according to the Succeſſion of the Biſhops, to whom they conſign'd the care of the Church in *every Place*, which has been continued down to our times, † and *a complete Body of the Scripture preſerv'd, without either Forgery or Falſification, without either Addition or Subſtraction, &c.* Which Words are an expreſs aſſertion, that the *Doctrine* and *Diſcipline* and *Scriptures* which they then had, were the ſame which the *Apoſtles deliver'd*, and were then receiv'd *in all Churches of the World*, with which *Ireneus* and the *Gauls* had any Communication. (*t*) *l.* 4. *c.* 63.

Tertullian (*u*) appeals to all the Apoſtolick Churches, to the *Galatians*, to the *Theſſalonians*, to the *Romans*, to the *Coloſſians*, to the *Epheſians*, *&c.* and, in a word, to all the Churches which joyn'd in Communion with them, to prove the *Copy of St. Luke*, which the Catholicks had (and not that of *Marcion*) to be Genuine and Sincere. He adds too, that the ſame Authority will juſtify *the other three Goſpels* likewiſe, ſince they were receiv'd (*x*) *from, and ac-* (*u*) *l.* 4. *againſt Marcion c.* 5. (*x*) *Per illas & ſecundum illas.*

† I render (*tractatione pleniſſima*) *a complete Body or Treatiſe*; becauſe it can ſignify nothing elſe here; though the Expreſſion in the *Latine* is not very proper. But he that Tranſlated this Work of *Ireneus* out of *Greek*, did not underſtand the *Latin* Tongue, and has hundreds of Expreſſions more barbarous and improper then this.

cording

(y) *Of Præscript. c.* 33, 34. *cording to*, the Copies of thoſe Churches. (y) He produces, in another place, Teſtimonies from ſeveral Epiſtles of St. *Paul*, from St. *Peter* and St. *John*, and then for further confirmation

(z) *c.* 36. of the Truth of what he urges (z) exhorts thoſe who had a mind to exerciſe their Curioſity in the buſineſs of their Salvation, to run over the Churches planted by theſe and the other Apoſtles, where they might find * *their Authentick Writings* (or Letters) *ſtill remaining*,

(a) *Authenticæ literæ.* (a) expreſſing the Doctrine and repreſenting the Piety of each of them. A little after he brings in the Catholick Church thus arguing with the Hereticks concerning the Scripture,---

(b) *c.* 37. *p.* 215. (b) Who are you? When and whence came you hither? What do you in my ground,

---

* *Rigaltius* and after him, F. *Simon*, will have no more meant here by *Authentick Letters or Writings*, then that what the Apoſtles Wrote was ſtill preſerv'd in the *Original Language*, in thoſe Places. But I would fain know what great matter there was in that. The Epiſtles were firſt Wrote in *Greek*, and were without queſtion ſtill Extant in *Greek* (not only in the Apoſtolick, but) in all thoſe Churches, to which that Language remain'd ſtill familiar, if not in others too. *Tertullian* certainly deſign'd ſomething *Singular and Peculiar* to the Churches planted by the Apoſtles, when he ſay'd their Authentick Letters or Writings were kept there, and conſequently muſt intend the *very Originals* of them. And why theſe two Learned Men ſhould judge otherwiſe (ſince this is the moſt natural, though not the only, Senſe of the Word) I cannot gueſs. For 'tis certain, Manuſcripts have been preſerv'd many hundred years longer then the time was, which paſs'd between the Apoſtles and the days of *Tertullian*.

ſince

ſince you belong not to me? By what Right, O *Marcion*, do you cut down my Woods? What Authority have you, *Valentinus*, to turn the Courſe of my Fountains? Who gave you Power, *Apelles*, to overthrow my Fences? What do you Sowing and Feeding here at your Pleaſures? The Poſſeſſion is mine, I have enjoy'd it for a long time, I firſt enjoy'd it. *I derive a certain Original from the Authors themſelves, whoſe it was.* I am the Heir of the Apoſtles, *&c.* Thus Writ *Ireneus* and *Tertullian* concerning the Scriptures of the *New Teſtament*; and what they thus Writ, certainly *concerns all thoſe Books*, which *they held for Genuine and Pure*, in oppoſition to the Hereticks of their Times. Theſe, they tell us, were deriv'd from the Apoſtles, by the hands of thoſe Churches, which they founded all over the World; them they produce for their Vouchers in the preſent caſe: and appeal likewiſe to the Doctrine embrac'd in every one of them, which was very conſonant to the Books of the Catholicks, but not to thoſe of the Hereticks.

Thus much we may eaſily learn from *Ireneus* He tells us, (*c*) That the ſeveral ſorts of Hereticks, with which he had to do, *had forg'd a great number of Apocryphal and Spurious Pieces.* Theſe without queſtion, contain'd the Principles of their Doctrine, and were ſent abroad into the World as the chief Grounds and Foundations of what they taught. But all was Cheat and Couſenage, and the Fictions of their own Brains. What they vented, was Heretical and Erroneous, as this Father proves at

(*c*) *l.* 1. *c.* 17.

large from hence, (*d*) that it was contrary to the Faith, which the Apoſtles had planted in all places, and which had been learnt, and might be learnt every day, from the Churches founded by them. And again in another Place (*l.* 3. *c.* 11. *p.* 259.) he rejects ſome Goſpels of the *Valentinians*, becauſe they contain'd Blaſphemies, and Doctrines contrary to thoſe which had been Publiſh'd by the Apoſtles. So likewiſe *Tertullian* ſpeaks of ſome of the ſame Hereticks —— (*e*) Let their Doctrine be compar'd with the Apoſtles and we ſhall quickly ſee by the contrariety thereof, that it proceeds neither from any of them nor their Diſciples. The Apoſtles did not contradict one another, neither did their Diſciples contradict them. The Churches, which they founded agree in the ſame Doctrines, and ſo do thoſe too, which being of a later Original, deriv'd their Inſtruction from them which were planted before them; and therefore may be call'd Apoſtolical as well as they, becauſe owning and embracing the ſame Faith. Let the Hereticks ſhow that they deſerve that Title upon either of theſe accounts, that theſe Churches acknowledge the ſame Doctrine which they do, and receive them to Peace and Communion as Brethren. But this they cannot do. —— (*f*) They are Forreigners, they are Enemies to the Apoſtles, becauſe they teach a different Faith. —— And ſince their Faith is ſo different, we may be ſure they have adulterated the Scriptures. For they, who were reſolv'd to teach perverſly, were under a neceſſity of corrupting thoſe Books, upon which their Doctrine was to be grounded. ——

(*d*) *l.* 3. *c.* 3, 4.

(*e*) *Of Preſcript. c.* 32. *p.* 213.

(*f*) *c.* 38. *p.* 216.

Whereas

Whereas we, who preſerve the Doctrine entire, have preſerv'd the Books ſo too, without changing or adding or taking away. —— We teach nothing but what was to be found in the Scriptures from the beginning, before they were corrupted and interpolated. —— Before *Marcion* had lay'd violent hands upon them, employing a Knife and not a Style, and cutting away whatever he thought convenient and was contrary to his Errors and Hereſies. —— (*g*) † For where the Truth of the Chriſtian Faith and Doctrine appears, there the Genuine and true Copies of the Scripture are certainly to be found.

(*g*) *c.* 19.

XXXV. Having thus given a large account of the Teſtimony which theſe two very Ancient Writers of the *Chriſtian Church* give to the Books of the *New Teſtament*, I ſhall now paſs on to remark, before I conclude, what Opinion an Eminent *Heathen*, even *Julian the Apoſtate* (that bitter and inveterate Enemy of Chriſtianity) entertain'd concerning them. This we may eaſily learn from what he Wrote and Publiſh'd againſt our Holy Religion; which may be ſeen in Mr. *Spanheim*'s Edition of his Works, wherein St. *Cyril*'s Anſwer to the Books of that Emperour, with what remains of the Books themſelves, againſt the Chriſtians is Printed, as it is alſo in *Cyril*'s own Works.

† *Ubi apparuerit eſſe veritatem & diſciplinæ, & fidei Chriſtianæ, illic erit & veritas Scripturarum.*

There we ſhall find, that *Julian* expreſly mentions the Writings of (*b*) the Four Evangeliſts by Name, of St. *Paul* and St. *Peter* as their own proper and undoubted Works; that he ſpeaks (*i*) of the Genealogy of our Saviour, as Recorded by St. *Matthew* and St. *Luke*; that he quotes Paſſages (*k*) out of St. *Matthew*, (*l*) out of St. *John*, (*m*) out of the *Acts* of the *Apoſtles*, (*n*) out of St. *Paul*'s Epiſtle to the *Romans*, and (*o*) out of the Firſt to the *Corinthians*; and diſputes againſt them. To which may be added, that he ſpeaks of the Writings of St. *Matthew* and St. *Luke*, (*p*) alſo in his Epiſtles.

(*b*) *l.* 10. *p.* 327.
(*i*) *l.* 8. *p.* 253.
(*k*) *l.* 9. *p.* 291. *l.* 10. *p.* 335.
(*l*) *l.* 8. *p.* 261, 262. *l.* 10. *p.* 335.
(*m*) *l.* 9. *p.* 314.
(*n*) *l.* 9. *p.* 320. *l.* 10. *p.* 351.
(*o*) *l.* 7. *p.* 245.
(*p*) *Ep.* 42. *p.* 423.

The Inferences, which naturally ariſe from hence, are theſe two, Firſt, that it was well known among the Heathens, that the Books of the *New Teſtament*, as embrac'd by the Catholicks, were the Records, upon which the Chriſtian Religion was founded; and accordingly *Julian* ſets himſelf directly to oppoſe, what was delivered in them, as the moſt ready way to overthrow and ruin Chriſtianity. Secondly, That there was then no Reaſon known, why the Books ſhould be ſuſpected, as not really Wrote by thoſe Perſons, to whom we aſcribe them, or why they ſhould be judg'd to have been chang'd and alter'd by the Catholicks. For if there had been the leaſt probable ground for ſuch an accuſation, we may be ſure, this Learned and keen Adverſary of theirs would not have forgot to lay it to their charge; he would never have cited the Books, as the Genuine Works of St. *John* St. *Paul*, *&c.* but affirm'd

affirm'd plainly they were the Forgeries and Contrivances of later times, drawn up, by he knew not whom, to advance the Credit and Reputation of their Maſter. Since therefore he does nothing of this, but the quite contrary; ſince he quotes theſe Pieces as the Writings of the Apoſtles and Apoſtolick Men, and never accuſes the Chriſtians of Falſifications or Corruptions, we may be certain that he knew of nothing, which could be juſtly objected againſt them, as to this Particular.

I would offer the ſerious conſideration of this Inſtance to the *mighty diſcoverers* of the preſent Age. We have here an Emperour, who wanted neither Learning, nor Wit, nor Induſtry, inflam'd with a moſt eager deſire of running down Chriſtianity; aſſiſted therein, not only with the Writings of *Celſus*, *Porphyry*, *Hierocles*, and others, who had engag'd in the ſame cauſe before him; but alſo with the beſt advice and directions (we may be ſure) of *Libanius*, *Jamblichus*, *Maximus*, and the reſt of the *Sophiſts* and *Philoſophers*, who flouriſh'd in his time; who yet, with all theſe helps, could find no ſolid Grounds or Reaſons for repreſenting the *New Teſtament* as a Forgery. So far was he from pretending thereto, that, on the contrary, he owns the Books thereof, which he had occaſion to mention, for the Genuine Works of thoſe Perſons, to whom we attribute them at preſent, and does not any where declare his ſuſpicions, that either they, or any of the reſt, were either forg'd or corrupted by the Catholicks. Whereas there are thoſe in our days,

days, who, above Thirteen Hundred years after him, pretend to discover that, which neither he, nor any of the Learned asserters of Heathenism (who doubtless supplied him, upon occasion, with their most Curious and Critical Remarks and Observations) could do; and bear the World in hand, that those Ancient Monuments of our Faith, which are ascrib'd to the Evangelists and Apostles, are none of theirs, but the Impostures and Contrivances of designing Men, who have impos'd them upon the Credulous and unthinking part of Mankind. As if *they* had greater means and opportunities of discovering the Forgery at this distance (if there was one) then *Julian* and the zealous maintainers of the *Pagan* Religion had so long ago; or as if all the Christian World, for so many Centuries, (except themselves and a few more,) had been destitute of Integrity and Understanding. But whether the *weakness* or *confidence* of such pretences be greater, I shall leave the Reader to determine.

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